

Bavarian News

Special Edition

U.S. Army Garrisons Grafenwoehr, Hohenfels, Ansbach, Bamberg, Schweinfurt, and Garmisch

Winter 2007

Grüss Gott!

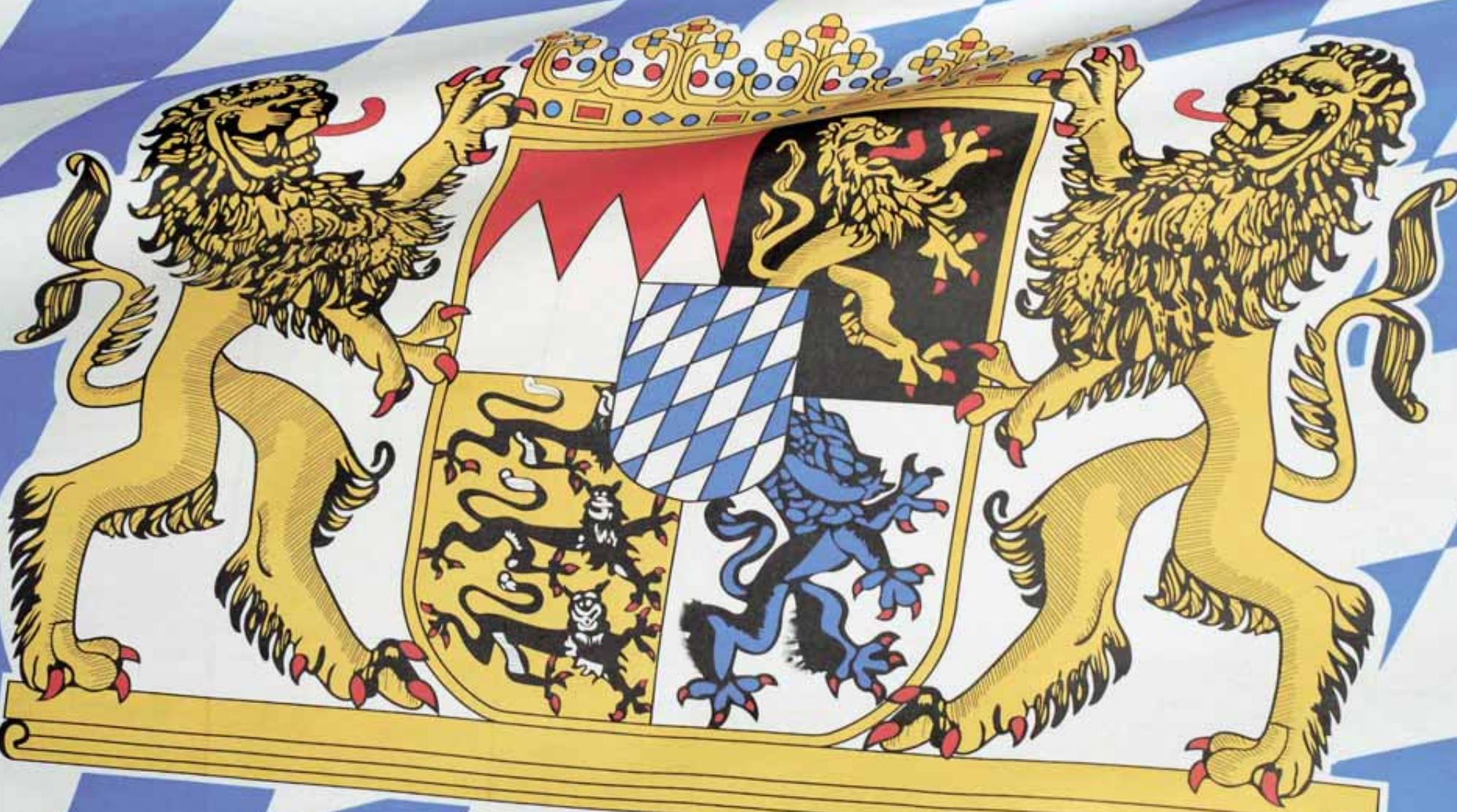


Photo by Paula Guzman

The inside track

Inside, you'll find all the information you need to make your adjustment to life in Bavaria. Whether this is your first trip out of the United States, or you're just moving here from another overseas installation, you'll find information on all of the resources we have to offer.

Keep this issue handy for all of the basic stuff you need to know including contact information.

Welcome Letters

The commanders of each garrison and the Bavarian Minister President Dr. Guenther Beckstein wish to welcome you to your new home! Also, check out the advice from others living in your new community.

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Command Message

Graf commander welcomes Soldiers, families to garrison



Melissa Marbut
(Schweinfurt)
"Come with an open
mind and get out
and see all you can
see."



Roxanna Sosa
(Hohenfels)
"Go out and try the
food. My cousin was
stationed overseas
and loved it because
she learned about the
culture, food, and
history. It's a once-in-a-lifetime experience."



Crystal Phillips
(Ansbach)
"Get out and off post;
do not be afraid and
just get lost off post.
You'll find beautiful
places and meet
people that way."



Shelly Trejo
(Vilseck)
"Learn the basics,
language-wise, like
asking for directions,
how much does it
cost, greetings... that
would really help a
lot."



Cpl. Daniel Stanley
(Grafenwoehr)
"Always have a
friend with you
when you go off
post because you
never know what
will happen."



Cynthia Maranian
(Bamberg)
"It's best to buy your
curtains before you
leave the States."



Molly Gohn
(Hohenfels)
"Get out and get
involved with the
community and
volunteer. It makes
being overseas a lot
more fun. Meeting
new people helps you
out in so many ways."



Lisa Parmeter
(Schweinfurt)
"Learn the language
and travel."

Welcome to the greatest place to live and serve in Europe! Now why can I say that? It's because of the people, the location, and the commitment the Army has made to the Soldiers and family members in the community.

The People

The Grafenwoehr and Vilseck military community is located in a rural portion of Bavaria.

Close to the former border of the Czech Republic and East Germany, the German people appreciate our presence and what the U.S. Forces did to help them secure their freedom at the end of World War II.

This sense of acceptance by the local people is further reinforced by the number of German natives who serve on the garrison staff. Comprising more than 70 percent of the workforce, they provide the long term stability that allows us to continue to provide quality service to all of our customers.

Many have served in our garrison for 30-40 years. They like their jobs and they like Americans. They will adopt you when you arrive and work to include you in all manner of fests, celebrations, and events; many tracing their lineage back to the Middle Ages.

Fisher Fests, May Pole Hangings, and other local fests seemingly every weekend of the year all combine to make sure you will really experience your time in Germany.

**The Location**

Grafenwoehr and Vilseck, as stated previously, are close to the Czech Republic and the former Eastern portion of Germany.

Berlin is four hours away. Prague, Czech Republic is two hours away. Arguably the best skiing in the Alps is in Garmisch, which happens to be a subordinate garrison to my garrison and located only three hours away.

Salzburg, Austria (of Sound of Music Fame) and Vienna are also only three to four hours away. Finally Verona, Venice, and Pisa, Italy, are all only a day trip away by automobile.

Simply put, you could not ask for a better location to see Europe than being stationed in this area, and I encourage all of you to dust off your exploring shoes and see Europe.

Army Commitment

Back in 2000, the Army elected to station permanent party personnel in Grafenwoehr. This isn't the same Grafenwoehr that many of you experienced in the 80's, where you came and trained and went home.

We are creating a new community for up to 25,000 Soldiers and their families in this area. Since the 2000 decision, the types of units have changed regularly, but the commitment to putting Soldiers here has not.

We have the 2d Striker Cavalry Regiment stationed in Vilseck and right now the theater enabling commands of military police, sustainment, and engineers coming to Grafenwoehr.

Along with this decision, the Army has put their money where their mouth is and poured greater than \$1 billion into the community. We

have a new shoppette, a new consolidated medical and dental clinic, a new 600-seat dining facility, and just recently opened the largest AAFES and DeCA complex in Europe.

We have a variety of homes, larger than you would expect (1600 -1800 square feet for our lower enlisted Soldiers), and most integrated into our local German communities in build-to-lease.

Combined with Department of the Army 1 + 1 barracks for our Soldiers and a new \$14 million fitness center, Grafenwoehr has definitely changed for the better and most of it is to support our growing Soldier and family member population.

There will be some growing pains as we change from a very quiet, well-kept secret to a thriving community focused on great local training for our Soldiers and brand new state-of-the-art facilities for our Soldiers and their family members.

I am often asked what I think about my job. I wouldn't change my job with anyone. It is exciting to be here, building a quality community for everyone.

The commander of U.S. Army Europe calls Grafen-Fels (Grafenwoehr, Vilseck, and Hohenfels), the Crown Jewel of Europe and regularly states that the last Army Soldier in Europe will turn off the lights in Grafenwoehr.

Come join us and help me continue to make this the best place to live and serve in Europe.

Col. Brian T. Boyle
Commander, U.S. Army
Garrison Grafenwoehr

Bavarian Minister President lauds German-American past, friendship

**Dear American Soldiers, dear family
members:**

The Pentagon has sent you to Bavaria for a tour of duty and to serve your nation. This may well be your first time in Bavaria.

In my function as the Governor of the Free State of Bavaria and in the name of all Bavarian citizens, I cordially welcome you here and hope that you will feel at home here although far away from home. It is our goal to make your stay in Bavaria as pleasant as possible.

Whether you are stationed in Grafenwoehr, Vilseck, and Hohenfels or in Ansbach, Illesheim, Bamberg, Schweinfurt, or Garmisch, you will be met by friendly people who are happy to receive you here.

Today, the U.S. Army can look back at 60 years of history in Bavaria. At the end of World War II it freed us from Nazi-dictatorship and during the Cold War it protected our interests against those of the Soviet Union and eventually contributed to the fall of the Iron Curtain.

All of that plus our common values such as freedom, justice, and human dignity are the reason for the close friendship between the United States of America and Germany and Bavaria respectively.



" Whether you are stationed in Grafenwoehr, Vilseck, and Hohenfels or in Ansbach, Illesheim, Bamberg, Schweinfurt, or Garmisch, you will be met by friendly people who are happy to receive you here. "

The political and economic cooperation across the Atlantic Ocean was, and still is, a significant part of Bavarian politics.

Bavaria has traditionally been home to the military. It was already well-respected by the population during the days of the Bavarian Kingdom (through 1918). At military installations, Soldiers quickly became an integral part of the communities' social life with the formation of the German Armed Forces (Bundeswehr) in 1955.

This also applies to the foreign military forces stationed in Bavaria, especially the U.S. Army. The population supports the military. State-wide, festive oath-of-office ceremonies by young German military recruits are held in public. Bavarian politicians and citizens enjoy visiting the events held at the various U.S. military installations.

That also ensures continued relations with the approximately 20,000 U.S. Soldiers and their family members who live in Bavaria.

Our state has significantly advanced in the years after World War II. However, Bavaria has always kept its inherent traditional characteristics.

The remarkable structural change from an agricultural state to a dynamic economic region was continuously and systematically planned and supported by the Bavarian state

Government.

It strengthened the state's amiability as the home of its citizens, preserved its cultural and regional diversity, while simultaneously putting it on a new foundation that is based on its economic vitality. This has secured the sustainability of our state for future generations.

Americans who live in Bavaria value our art of living, the literal Bavarian "Gemuetlichkeit" and the excellent food and beverages. Who doesn't like Weisswuerste with Brezen and Weissbier, or Bratwurst with cabbage and a refreshing Franconian wine.

Bavaria has the highest concentration of breweries worldwide. In Franconia, excellent wine, diverse and noble in taste, is produced.

This "Welcome Guide 2007" will inform you about Bavaria's peculiarities. I recommend that you get to know our beautiful state in your leisure time. I am sure that you will learn to love it too.

I wish you a successful tour of duty and many pleasant experiences in Bavaria.

Dr. Guenther Beckstein
Bavarian Minister President

Bavarian News

Grafenwoehr, Hohenfels, Ansbach, Bamberg, Schweinfurt, and Garmisch

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Col. Brian Boyle

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Schweinfurt opens arms to new Soldiers

Welcome to Schweinfurt, the most dynamic city in Germany! Schweinfurt is one of the best places to live and work.

There is a saying that "people make the place." Well, here in Schweinfurt, that is very true. We are a fairly large community with a small town feel. The

Schweinfurt community of more than 11,000 Soldiers, family members, and civilians is located on a pretty small campus, so you will quickly come to learn the names and faces of your neighbors.

We are situated in the best area of Germany; not only are we in the center of Germany, but pretty much the center of Europe, and we are in Bavaria. And, to top that, we are in the Franconia region, which has numerous wineries and spas to enjoy with a day trip.

We have a great relationship with our local Lord Mayor and Landrat, and the U.S. Army



has developed an extremely close relationship with our local community.

As a matter of fact, about 83 percent of the workforce is German, and many have worked for our Army for 35 years or more. They are extremely proud of the service they provide to our Army serving our Soldiers and our families.

The workforce of U.S. Army Garrison Schweinfurt is dedicated to the Soldiers and Families of our Army. Over the past year, we started numerous improvements to the quality of life for our Soldiers and families.

We spent \$15 million to improve our Soldier and family housing and, during this fiscal year, will complete the upgrading of our fitness centers, recreation center, Army Community Service Center, the Middle School Zone, the community club, and Women, Infants, and Children center, to name a few of the 90 or so projects in USAG Schweinfurt.

The key to success is to get involved! An assignment to Schweinfurt is great. You just need to take advantage of it. We are about a four-hour drive from a number of great

locations (Poland, France, Switzerland, Austria, Czech Republic), but you don't need to drive four hours to enjoy yourself.

Schweinfurt is in the middle of the Franconian wine land. Almost every weekend in the summer you can take in rich German culture in the form of fests.

And in the fall, the Federweissen season is here along with the authentic Franconian Schlachtschüssel (only in Schweinfurt can you experience this!).

Our ACSC offers many services to help the newly-arrived adjust to their new surroundings. They have a loan closet, from which you may borrow household goods, like dishes, coffee makers, and car seats, to use until your own possessions arrive.

They are also great at answering almost any question that you might have. They are home to our newly renovated Soldier and Family Assistance Center for our wounded warriors.

ACSC also runs a program for spouses called Schweinfurt Newcomer Awareness Program for Spouses. This is a week-long

program designed to orient our newcomers to the garrison and programs offered here.

Participants also learn a bit about the city of Schweinfurt with tours of local shops and restaurants along with a short German class.

The garrison is home to the 2nd Brigade Combat Team and the 1/91 Airborne Cavalry Squadron. We have four main installations which offer a full range of services.

We are also home to one of the largest training areas in Europe, where tens of thousands of Soldiers have trained over the past few years, with the only Air Assault certified training area in Europe.

I hope that you and your family enjoy your time here in Schweinfurt. We are here to support you in every way.

Every Day...Better! This is our motto and we live by this mantra.

Lt. Col. Anthony E. Haager
Commander, U.S. Army
Garrison Schweinfurt

Bamberg programs geared toward newcomers

Welcome to U.S. Army Garrison Bamberg, located in one of the most beautiful and idyllic cities in Europe.

Your assignment to Bamberg will be one of the most memorable assignments you and your family can have so be prepared to enjoy your time here.

The garrison's main focus and reason for being is the support and well-being of our Soldiers and families. From the moment you arrive, our garrison agencies, staff, and award-winning services work to make your transition into your new overseas community a breeze.



Warner Barracks is a medium-sized garrison located in the heart of Bamberg. The garrison's proximity to the Altstadt (old town) makes it a unique and convenient place to live.

But, before stepping outside the gate to sample the offerings from one of the nine local breweries, I encourage you to get to know your Army community from the inside out by

enrolling in the People Encouraging People class offered through Army Community Service.

PEP gives newcomers the information they need to immediately take advantage of the services offered here and the knowledge to begin experiencing the German culture out there. Take PEP, and in one week you'll be calling Bamberg your home.

Customer service is our business, so we know that where you live is just as important as how you live. We are proud to say that the Army's commitment and this command's commitment to quality of life improvements can be seen in every aspect of what we do.

Soldier and family housing here is currently seeing a \$6.3 million dollar investment to renovate over 860 Soldier barracks. Soldiers, families, and civilians will experience a high quality of life in this community with programs and recreational services staffed by a workforce comprised of both Department of the Army civilians and German Nationals.

Our MWR services are offered in state-of-the-art facilities like the Freedom Fitness Facility which opened in 2005, and a new CYS Sports and Fitness facility opening in the spring of 2008, which will feature a climbing

wall, youth aerobic/weight area and teen center annex. This facility will be one of a kind and a hallmark of the European communities.

Our nationally accredited Department of Defense certified Child Care facilities and Child and Youth Services after school and sports programs will support your children during your time here.

I encourage you to start making your own family memories and participate in our award winning programs such as productions at the Stable Theater or one of the many offerings from our community library.

After settling into the community, take the time to discover Europe through the gates of this 1,000-year-old city. Bamberg is an UNESCO world cultural heritage site and is one of the few German cities that sustained virtually no damage during World War II.

Located within seven hills, it is frequently referred to as the Franconian Rome. A lot can be discovered from above or below Bamberg. Don't miss the picturesque views that can be had from atop historic sites such as the Altenburg Castle and St. Michealsberg or discover the world below by exploring the caves underneath the city.

Additionally, I encourage you to attend the local street and church festivals here and in the surrounding areas, they are wonderful.

Finally, while it is not easy to leave the beautiful city of Bamberg, it is important to note that there are wonderful opportunities to discover the countryside as well, of particular note is the Franconian Swiss or the three dozen castles in the area. In Bamberg, there are opportunities year round to experience the tastes, sights and sounds of German culture and hospitality.

In closing, I would like to say that your time in Bamberg will be enjoyable, not only because of the wonderful cultural experiences but because we here in the garrison work everyday so our Soldiers and families can say: "Bamberg was the greatest community in which I ever lived."

Our garrison is committed to helping you make memories of a lifetime, everyday.

Lt. Col. Gary A. Rosenberg
Commander, U.S. Army
Garrison Bamberg

Ansbach heralded for 'warm, friendly atmosphere'

Welcome to U.S. Army Garrison Ansbach! I think you'll find Ansbach a wonderful area to live, train, work and play.

Throughout the garrison and the surrounding communities, you'll find the people are friendly and always willing to lend a helping hand—and local officials and agencies stand at the ready to help make life wonderful for our Soldiers, civilians, and family members.



This garrison is on the rise to becoming the garrison of choice throughout the Army.

After being named as one of the U.S. military's enduring installations in Europe, we're moving forward with renovations, building new facilities and making plans for a large townhome neighborhood with an

adjoining shopping center at the former Urlas Training Center.

In the past couple of years, we've put more than \$41 million into renovating family housing and barracks, and almost \$2 million into upgrading our fitness centers.

In 2008, work begins on the \$55 million town home project at Urlas along with \$32 million for new barracks at our Katterbach and Storck Barracks kasernes.

And in the long range plan, we're looking at a new commissary in 2009, a new Post Exchange in 2010 and a new \$25 million dollar fitness center on Katterbach.

You'll find that we have wonderful schools here in Ansbach with teachers and staff that truly go above and beyond in making sure children receive a top-notch education.

With the small size of our schools combined with the caring natures of those who work in them, children also receive personalized help in dealing with issues such as the challenges of

living overseas and the deployment of parents.

I urge you to explore the wealth of resources available to you and your family from our Army Community Service and other organizations who stand ready to make your assignment here an incredible one.

From our People Encouraging People newcomer's program, to financial advisers, to employment help to personal counselors to deployment readiness assistants and so much more, this community is well-stocked with people who care and will do everything within their power to help you.

All of this is going to make Ansbach an even better assignment than it already is, and I assure you that this is one of the best assignments a Soldier can ask for.

You just can't beat the warm, friendly atmosphere, the tremendous history of this area and, with our being right in the middle of the country, there are so many opportunities

to travel throughout Europe.

I ask you to get involved with our great team that we have here—volunteerism is alive and well at Ansbach, and the entire garrison and community benefits from people helping people.

We also work to be good neighbors in the local communities through our people volunteering throughout the area, supplementing local emergency services, adhering to all host nation governmental laws and regulations, and shopping, living and having fun among our hosts.

Get out and enjoy your tour here, make full use of all of the support the garrison provides and please let us know if there is something we can do better to make this an assignment you will cherish the rest of your career.

Lt. Col. Tammy S. McKenna
Commander, U.S. Army
Garrison Ansbach

Hohenfels treasures German-American connections, 'hometown' feeling

Welcome to Hohenfels, the best kept secret in the U.S. Army. Nestled in the hills of the Bavarian Upper Palatinate, our location combines the advantages of small village Bavarian living with easy access to the major German cities of Regensburg and Nuremberg.



We are a fantastic place to live consisting of about 3,000 Soldiers and 4,000 civilians and family members sharing a sense of community with each other and our German neighbors that have developed and been strengthened over the past 60 years.

Our connections with the local populations are great. Every year in May we have a German-American festival where our neighbors visit us on post, enjoy music, merriment and the sense of community we share and almost

every month there is an opportunity to join a local fest in the German communities.

Once a month, Army Community Service offers a five-day newcomer orientation for family members called Hallo Hohenfels. The highlights of the orientation include a tour of the post, a short survival German language course, a trip to neighboring Parsberg for a tour of the shopping areas and a train ride to Regensburg to familiarize you with the German train system and to visit a large shopping mall in the heart of the city.

In the past few months, we have consolidated many of the Soldier and family service programs into the newly renovated Bldg. 10. The one-stop welcome center filled with customer-oriented workers helps make Soldiers and their families' transition to and living in Hohenfels easier and more fulfilling than ever before and also features Brew in the Box, our new cappuccino bar.

Over the last year alone, we have invested more than \$10 million upgrading facilities to

make the Hohenfels garrison a better place to live and work. You will see this investment in our future all around post to include the ongoing construction of additions to the Sunrise Lodge, the teen center, and the garrison gym.

We are beginning work on the post theater, new car wash, and upgrades to single Soldier quarters in 2008. Over the next four years we plan more renovations and construction projects to include a Community Entertainment Center, a \$6 million outdoor recreation multi-use facility, and eventually the construction of an entirely new post gym.

Whether you are assigned to the Joint Multinational Readiness Center or one of the many other units here, Hohenfels is a great place to work. JMRC provides realistic and demanding training for U.S. Army task forces stationed in Europe as well as units from a multitude of Allied nations. Additionally, they provide training for individual Soldiers and units on their way to participate in KFOR in

Kosovo through urban breach courses and close quarters combat courses for individuals all the way up to mission rehearsal exercises for units deploying to Operation Iraqi Freedom or Operation Enduring Freedom.

Our unparalleled access to training with multinational forces and an outstanding quality of life combine to make Hohenfels an assignment destination of choice.

Hohenfels is a great place for leaders to lead, Soldiers to Soldier, and families to grow. I hope you and your family enjoy your tour in Hohenfels.

Our No. 1 one goal is to exceed the expectations of the Soldiers, family members, and civilians in the Hohenfels military community, and we work hard to meet this goal every day!

Lt. Col. Gary Bloomberg
USAG Hohenfels
Commander

What I wish I knew before moving here

One Army wife outlines the lessons she's learned since moving to Bavaria

by MICHELLE SMITH
Special to the Bavarian News

Ask anyone how they feel about living in Germany and you'll get a mixed reaction. Some say, "wunderbar." Some say, "nicht so gut." But one thing everybody agrees on is that getting settled in a foreign country can try even the most patient of souls!

Now, I think I'm a pretty easy-going military spouse. My husband and I lived in five different homes in the first five years of our marriage, including South Korea, and the longest we've lived anywhere since has been two and a half years.



So moving into a new house does not bother me. It's the moving into a new home coupled with learning a new language, money, laws, weather, neighborhood, and culture that starts to wear out my patience.

So looking back a year and half, the things I wish someone had told me to expect when we moved to Bavaria, can be broken down into three categories of frustration: Housing, Driving, and Shopping.

Housing

This, for me, has been the biggest block of frustration, and probably will be for you too, because we invest so much time and effort trying to feel settled in our new "home" environment. Plus, it's really the first thing we encounter here that is so completely different.

From the moment you arrive in your temporary or permanent quarters, things may seem a little quirky.

To wash your newly unpacked clothes, don't expect as much hot water as you were used to in the States.

To dry those clothes, you will have to stick the dryer vent tube out of the window when running it (in some places) and expect it to take half a day to dry. Really!

So, while your clothes dry, head to the commissary for your first visit, but don't forget your military ID card – and a ration card. That's right, your coffee is rationed, along with cigarettes and liquor, and they are strict. And don't think about having your favorite specialty coffee shipped to you. It's not allowed through your APO.

After a visit to the commissary, you'll be ready to cook your first dinner in, what I like to call, the German "mini-bake oven." But wait. First you have to know the conversion for Fahrenheit to Celsius. Quick math: Take the Fahrenheit temperature and subtract 32. Then, divide by 1.8. Bon appetit!

Once your household goods arrive, be careful with your electronics or you could make some costly mistakes.

To vacuum, you cannot simply put an adaptor plug (the little white round things) onto your American vacuum cleaner and plug it into the wall. Sure it will fit, but you can then add a new vacuum to your move-in budget. Remember, our electronics/appliances are 110 volts and your new home's outlets will be mostly 220 volts.

Unless that vacuum (or microwave, radio, – pretty much your entire house) is dual-voltage, you must use a transformer (the silver metal boxes) that can convert your 110v vacuum to 220v. Check your local thrift shops for a "slightly used" one with the correct "max load" for your vacuum or you'll blow the fuse in the transformer too. Can you tell I had some problems with electronics?

There's one more quirky thing about the electricity. Two-twenty voltage and 110v have different Hertz. They are 50 Hz and 60 Hz respectively.

What are Hertz? Hertz are the number of times per second the electrical current reverses direction. For you, this means that your 110v clock will not keep proper time because the cycle of the electricity is different. You'll understand this the first time you or your spouse is late for PT.

Here's an easy solution to many of the appliance/electricity problems. Buy an inexpensive 220v alarm clock, microwave, coffee maker, and maybe even a vacuum cleaner, to use while living here and then pass them on.

And, finally, one of the hardest things for me to get used to in my home has been recycling. I did not expect it to be so strict and exacting. Looking back it seemed a huge nuisance and I thought I would never be able to learn what went where. Now, it is second nature. And, I am still amazed at how little "refuse" is taken out of my house.

To start recycling, go to your local Self-Help Center. Get the yellow bags for plastics, the stand the yellow bag goes in, and the

recycling manual for your area. Some of our kitchens already have the small bins under the sink to separate glass, paper, cans, etc. If yours does not, you can pick up a sorter fairly inexpensively.

Keep with it and soon it won't feel like such a chore. I promise. And, hey, you won't need your big unsightly "American" garbage can in your kitchen anymore.

Driving

This can be a harrowing experience. There are things that they just do not tell you in the driver's training course. Know that you will never look at your speedometer the same again!

More quick math: To convert kilometers to miles, take the kilometers, multiply by six. Then, drop the last zero. Now you know how fast you are going.

You should also know that Germans have a, what I call, "liberal passing policy." There have been many times I have hit my brakes in order to miss a head-on collision due to someone passing. They will pass on curves, on hills, and yes, even when there is on-coming traffic. Be alert.

Before you get out on the road, memorize the priority road rules and who has the right of way. Bottom line: You must be a defensive driver, but get out there and enjoy the views of the Bavarian countryside.

On that note, there are two things you should buy before leaving on your adventure.

First, don't forget the gas coupons from your local shoppette. Purchase gas coupons at the on-post gasoline price and then redeem the coupons at German Esso gas stations (or ARALs on Autobahns) for a much lower price than what is listed on the pump.

Your second purchase should be a navigational system. I truly believe it is the best purchase our family has made since arriving in Germany. I wish I had had one from our first week here. It is empowering – and the voice on some of them (we've named ours Sally) is good for a laugh when you're placing your faith in a machine!

Shopping

The two things you need to know about shopping in Bavaria quite simply are don't expect shopping bags and don't expect convenient hours. There is no 24-hour Wal-Mart here.

When you venture out, you will see most

shoppers carrying baskets or canvas bags. That's because German stores do not use plastic bags like American stores. In some larger chain stores they will give you bags for free; however, don't expect it. Most stores will, instead, sell you bags for 5-15 Euro cents each.

My advice is, "When in Rome, do as the Romans." Go ahead and purchase a basket or reusable canvas bags. I have two that fold up, fit in my purse, and work great. Besides, who needs even more plastic bags to recycle!

The shopping hours continue to be a headache for me even now. First, learn this word – "Ruhetag." Ruhetag means the day that a store is closed or "rest day."

Now, don't misunderstand, the store is already going to be closed on Sunday and probably by 2 p.m. on Saturday. Ruhetag is an additional day during the week that they are closed. Most stores have one and I'm convinced no store in town has the same Ruhetag just to keep it interesting.

In addition to a Ruhetag, most stores, even the chain stores, close during the midday hours and are very rarely open late in the evening. By late, I mean past 7 p.m. Pay attention to the "öffnungszeiten" (store hours) on the door so you will know exactly when they are open.

I know not being able to shop when you want will be frustrating at first. However, my best advice is to get used to the slower pace – and enjoy it while you can.

I've shared with you some of the things to expect when settling into Bavaria in hopes that I can ease your frustration and anxiousness. Now I'll share one more thing that was completely unexpected.

A year and a half into it now, I wouldn't trade this life for anything. I have made more friends here than at any other duty station. I have been more actively involved in this community than at any other. I have made more life-long connections here all due to the willing spirit in this Army community.

I encourage you to take the ACS welcome classes and a German basic language class. And get involved in your Family Readiness Group and your Community and Spouses' Clubs. No one made me feel more "at home" as quickly as those organizations.

Embrace the unexpected, expand your horizons, and throw yourself into this new life with gusto. What you give out, you will certainly get back three-fold.

Spouses on the hunt: ACS employment readiness counselors can help newcomers land a job faster

by SUSAN ROBERTS
Vilseck ACS Employment Readiness Director

I started working when I was a sophomore in high school – not because my parents made me, but because I wanted to buy a car when I was "of age," and if I was going to have one, the payment would come from my pocket.

Since that time, I really had not stopped working since. That is,



until our PCS to Germany in February, 2005. Once we got housing, I unpacked our household goods. I scrubbed and cleaned everything in our house multiple times per week. I became good friends with Oprah, Dr. Phil and those Charmed sisters. I also practiced the fine art of meal planning and coupon clipping, because we were suddenly a one-income family.

I believe I was a little delusional when it came to moving to Germany. I imagined that it would be quite simple for me to move to a new country, spend a little time settling in, and then I would find the most amazing job ever and spend my weekends traveling around Europe. The traveling part came quite easily. The job... well... not so much.

Months went by, and I became more and more concerned about how I was now a "non-productive member of society." (That became my catch-phrase anytime friends and family from back home asked how I was doing.) I needed a job. I wanted a job. The several

month vacation from working was *not* in my plan!

I scoured the Civilian Human Resources Agency European Region website ("CHRA," for short) frequently. I applied for several jobs, and received the automated response about how I was "not referred for the position because my resume did not reflect the types of skills requested by the selecting official for this position." I was applying for administrative jobs and clerk's positions.

I was working on my Master's Degree for goodness sake! And I didn't meet the criteria for jobs? After being devastated for the umpteenth time, I ran across an advertisement for an ACS program – Employment Readiness. Little did I realize how much easier the job search became once I had the proper tools.

You see, finding a job in Germany is very different than finding a job in the States. There isn't a "help wanted" section in the Sunday paper where you can circle potential jobs with a red pen. Instead, most of the information about jobs here in Germany is found either online, or by word of mouth.

When looking online, you will most probably want to start at the "CHRA" Web site, which can be found at <http://www.chra.eur.army.mil>. There, you will find positions that fall under the categories of Appropriated Fund positions (commonly referred to as "GS" or "General Schedule" positions), Non-Appropriated Fund positions (jobs that are supported by MWR activities), and Local National positions (jobs available only for non-U.S. citizens).

Also, there are positions available through AAFES, other vendors on post, the commissary, or even contracting jobs.

Does it all sound a little too confusing? You can find out more information about all of these different types of positions from your ACS Employment Readiness Counselor: me! Every week I send out an e-mail advertising various positions open in our area. To sign up, simply call the Army Community Service in Vilseck CIV 09662-83-2650.

The Employment Readiness program offers one-on-one counseling, classes on Resume Writing/RESUMIX, and job interview skills. When you take a Resume Writing / RESUMIX class, you will be provided with information on not only how to apply for jobs in Germany, but also how to use the RESUMIX system, which is the Army's centralized resume program.

It's hard to be patient while looking for a job – believe me, I know! So what can you do in the meantime? One of the most important skills I try to emphasize with my clients is "networking."

Becoming involved in your community is one of the best ways to find out about potential job openings. Enroll in AFTB or a Financial Readiness class. Join the Vilseck Community and Spouses Club, the Kontakt Club, or become involved in your church. Become an active member of your FRG, or contact the Army Volunteer Coordinator, Vicki Cunningham, to find out where you could volunteer in the community.

Just remember, there are job resources available to you – all you have to do is ask. I have office hours in Vilseck on Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday, and Friday, and in Grafenwoehr on Thursday. Call me at DSN 476-2650 or CIV 09662-83-2650 to make an appointment if you would like additional information.

See below for the contact information of the ACS offices in all communities.

Ansbach

Katterbach Kaserne: DSN 467-2883 or CIV 09802-83-2883
Storck Barracks: DSN 467-4555 or CIV 09841-83-4555

Bamberg

DSN 469-7777 or CIV 0951-300-7777

Schweinfurt

DSN 354-6933/6751 or CIV 09721-96-6933/6751

Wuerzburg

DSN 350-7103 or CIV 0931-889-7103

Garmisch

DSN 440-3777 or CIV 08821-750-3777

Hohenfels

DSN 466-4860 or CIV 09472-83-4860
Employment Readiness Program: DSN 466-4089

Military clinics prep patients for local care

by KATIE COWART and ANNE TORPHY

Contributing writers

Whether you're new to the Army or not, seeking health care in a foreign country can seem a bit intimidating.

U.S. Medical Activity Bavaria strives to make this experience as easy as possible for patients. Currently, the U.S. Army Medical Activity, Bavaria consists of eight health clinics supporting 40,000 Soldiers and family members, with locations in Bamberg, Grafenwoehr, Hohenfels, Illesheim, Katterbach, Schweinfurt, Vilseck, and Wuerzburg.

Emergency vs. Urgent

BMEDDAC has provided some guidelines for your medical issues. An emergency is a sudden and unexpected medical condition, or the worsening of a condition which poses a threat to life, limb, or sight and requires immediate treatment; or a sudden, extremely painful condition that requires immediate treatment to alleviate suffering.

Conditions that require emergency care include: loss of consciousness, shortness of breath, chest pain, uncontrolled bleeding, drug overdose, suicide attempt, poisoning, acute psychosis, and unexpected weakness, to name a few.

Urgent care is medically necessary treatment that's required for illness or injury that would not result in further disability or death if not treated immediately – but treatment should not be put off.

The illness or injury does require professional attention, and should be treated within 24-48 hours to avoid development of complications or continued suffering. Conditions that should receive urgent care include: sprains, scrapes, earaches, severe headaches, rising fever, persistent vomiting, or diarrhea – conditions that are serious but are not life threatening.

Routine care

The first step for most health issues is to schedule an appointment at the clinics. The clinics have an open access policy, meaning that anyone with an eligible beneficiary card can be seen by a provider.

Hours and services vary by clinic. You may schedule your appointment at www.tricareonline.com.

Many minor health issues can be handled at your local U.S. Army health clinic and do not require a visit to a host nation facility. For those issues that require more care than is available

on post, clinic officials will make a referral to a civilian doctor or specialist.

Your provider will point you to the TRICARE representative who will be responsible for booking your appointment on the economy.

Most providers do speak some English, and many are fluent. The providers will take care of most of your paperwork, which includes sending the patient report and bill for services back to TRICARE for you.

If you do not have TRICARE, there is very little difference in this process. You will still go to a TRICARE representative for a referral, but you will have more paperwork to fill out for your own personal billing process. The TRICARE representative will also help you with the paperwork. The rest of the process is the same.

Many people get nervous at the thought of admittance into a German hospital. The Army health care system is there to take care of you, even when you are in a non-Army hospital. When military health care facilities are not able to provide you with the care you need, we will arrange for your health care in civilian hospitals and clinics.

Since many of us don't speak the language and are not familiar with the European health care system, patient liaisons help smooth the way. Not only are liaisons fluent in the language of their country, they are also fluent in English and other languages. They are well-acquainted with local hospital staff and know the medical system procedures.

Expect a patient liaison to make contact with you daily during the week during your stay in a German hospital and as needed on the weekends.

If you are admitted to a local German hospital after duty hours or on the weekend, you can ask to have your military treatment facility notified. They will make sure that a patient liaison is notified of your admission. On their first visit with you, they will provide a booklet with basic information on what to expect during your stay.

They are also there when you are discharged to make sure you understand your instructions for care at home and that you have your prescriptions.

Capt. Kattiya Urbanski is the Grafenwoehr Health Clinic Executive Officer and patient advocate.

"We will do everything we need to do to get a patient proper care," Urbanski said. "We won't send someone out onto the German economy blind."

The German health care system in Bavaria and the eight U.S. Army health clinics have a

very strong relationship and the German doctors regularly treat American patients.

Thousands of highly qualified local doctors provide excellent health care to military families and DoD civilians. Many doctors are members of international associations and have attended training in England or the United States.

All providers are screened and periodically reviewed by medical officials, the same as they are in the U.S. Admission procedures to a German hospital are similar to those practiced in the United States. You will have to provide patient identification information such as full name, address, date of birth, and next of kin.

You will also be asked to discuss information concerning payment of your hospital bill (only for DoD civilians and pay patients). For routine care, bring the TRICARE referral paperwork provided to you from the TRICARE Referral Office.

What you may expect in European health care facilities are slight cultural differences.

It's not unusual for two to three people to share a room, unless you pay a fee of approximately \$50 for a single room. It is also not common to have partitions between the beds and one television may be shared.

You may want to bring a DVD or MP3 player with headphones, or a book. You will need to bring your own towels, personal hygiene items, and pyjamas. Be sure to take local currency for telephone calls because cellular phones are not permitted on the wards.

Visiting hours are usually not restricted, but be aware that other patients in the room need rest.

Most European hospitals will serve a light continental breakfast of coffee or tea, rolls, butter, and jam. Lunch will be the heaviest meal of the day typically a local dish.

Dinner is light, usually bread and cheese or different meats. Ask your patient liaison to explain local food and customs you will experience in the hospital.

Emergency care

Living in Germany means limited hours on things that Americans are used to having available around the clock.

You have probably learned already that the health clinic does not have its own emergency room, nor is it open 24 hours a day.

In the case of an emergency, USAMEDDAC Bavaria suggests that you go to the nearest hospital. Call a toll-free number before you go: (0800) 350 3104. Calling allows the military healthcare system to ensure that the healthcare you receive in the host nation facility is

appropriate and of the quality expected.

If no one is available to drive you, emergency transportation can be provided by the German Red Cross.

Patients can access the ambulance service by calling for translation through the Military Police or directly through the German Red Cross. Dispatchers will send the closest available ambulance to your location. When necessary, a German Emergency Physician (Notartz) will be present to direct your care.

If you do have an emergency and need to go straight to the hospital instead of getting a referral, contact the TRICARE representative the next working day.

You will need to report your emergency as soon as possible to ensure that TRICARE will cover all costs, and if you do not have TRICARE, so you can get started on your billing paperwork.

Pregnancy

Pregnancy care is generally provided by a German obstetrician on the economy. A referral is required and this referral covers all of your pregnancy related visits and your delivery. Profiles for pregnant Soldiers are provided by the clinic.

Before your baby is born, have valid passports and marriage license prepared. Get a copy of the certificate of live birth from the hospital and submit it to DEERS/ ID Card section, as soon as possible after birth. The patient liaisons can assist with the birth registration process.

After your delivery, you and your baby will receive follow-up care in the health clinic. The first well-baby appointment is at two weeks of age. Bring any records from the hospital to the two week visit.

If you have a son and want him circumcised, you must notify the health clinic immediately after birth. Circumcisions will be done as soon after birth as possible.

Pharmacy

When you or a family member is seen by a German doctor on the local economy, you will need to get the prescription filled at a German pharmacy. This policy is in place for reasons of safety, as doses and names of medications are different on the economy.

You will need to pay for your prescription, and then fill out a form for reimbursement with TRICARE. Reimbursement usually takes four to six weeks. If you have questions about the medication, contact your pharmacy at the local health clinic on post.

Register your pets within two weeks of arriving

Special to the Bavarian News

The mission of military veterinary treatment facility is to provide complete medical services and support to the military working dog program. Although the focus is on maintaining the fighting strength of the military working dogs, the veterinary clinic also supports privately owned animals through limited health care services.

All pets traveling into the area, and pets purchased on the economy must be registered at the veterinary clinic within two weeks.

Owners should provide all pertinent information regarding the animal's medical history to include vaccination status and long-term medical concerns. Sponsor information is also required to for the registration.

All appointments are reserved for those pets that have completed this registration process. Registration can be completed during regular business hours on a walk-in basis.

All pets will be seen on an appointment only basis. There are two distinct types of appointments offered at the clinic: appointments for routine medical care and vaccinations and appointments for sick-call/illnesses.

The clinic does not provide emergency care to privately owned animals. A list of off-post veterinarians may be accessed through the European Veterinary Command Web site and from the veterinary clinic.

It is encouraged for owners of pets to establish a doctor-patient relationship with a local veterinarian for care needed after duty hours and on weekends.

The veterinary treatment facility provides an extensive list of services. The following list is not all inclusive: vaccinations; issuance of health certificates for travel; health exams; laboratory diagnostic evaluations of blood, urine, feces, and tissue; and radiographs.

Surgical services include routine out-patient

procedures to include, canine or feline spays, neuters, and dentals. Other surgical procedures will be completed at the discretion of the attending veterinary corps officer.

Owners may be referred to an off post medical provider at the discretion of the attending veterinarian if medical services can not be rendered at that time, or if pet is in need of specialty services.

The clinic staff requests that appointments be cancelled 48 hours prior to the day of the appointment. Any appointment missed without notification from the owner is considered a "no show".

After the owner has two "no show" appointments, a letter will be submitted to the sponsor's commander. After the third "no show", services will be suspended for 12 months.

If a surgical appointment is missed, to include the surgical in-processing appointment, services will be suspended for 12 months to include routine care. A late arrival of over 15 minutes will be considered a "no-show" and the appointment may need to be rescheduled.

For safety reasons, children under 8 years of age are not permitted in the veterinary treatment facility, and pets must be managed by individuals over the age of 18 years.

All pets must be on a leash or in a pet carrier.

Payment is required at the time services are rendered. There will be no exceptions granted. Payment of services can be done by cash, check, and major credit cards. Debit cards may be used if it has the Visa or Master Card emblems.

For additional information, contact the clinic staff during routine business hours.

Vilseck Clinic: DSN 476-2324
Hohenfels Clinic: DSN 466-4560
Schweinfurt Clinic: DSN 353-8359
Wuerzburg Clinic: DSN 350-7429
Ansbach Clinic: DSN 467-3179
Bamberg Clinic: DSN 469-7972

Family dental care depends on Soldier readiness

Special to the Bavarian News

Routine and emergency dental care is provided for active duty service members and their sponsored family members. Contingency demands for treatment of service members may occasionally limit access to care for family members. Family member dental beneficiaries are empanelled for space available care at the same dental treatment facility as their active duty sponsor.

Since a majority of active duty Soldiers stationed in Vilseck and Grafenwoehr are currently downrange, family members on these installations should have only limited problems in getting dental appointments at this time.

Specialty treatment is available on a limited basis and includes oral surgery, endodontics (root canals), pediatric dentistry (children's dentistry), periodontics, and orthodontics. Family members are highly encouraged to complete the majority of their dental needs prior to arriving in Germany.

Retirees and their family members can be seen on standby care. Patients will be offered the opportunity to remain at the dental clinic should a patient no-show occur; the standby patient can then receive needed care. Treatment for standby patient care is limited to procedures that can be completed in one visit.

Family members should take advantage of the TRICARE Dental Program managed by United Concordia Companies, Inc. For answers to any question regarding TDP, contact Dr. George Schad at CLIV: 06302676358.

For the Vilseck DC, call DSN 476-1720; Graf DC, DSN 475-1720; Hohenfels DC, DSN 466-1720; Ansbach Katterbach DC, DSN 467-2806; Ansbach Storck DC, DSN 467-4500; Bamberg DC, DSN 469-8895; Schweinfurt Ledward DC, DSN 354-7902; and Schweinfurt Leighton DC, DSN 350-6129.

Health Clinic Numbers

Ansbach

Katterbach Clinic
Hours: 7:30 a.m.-4:30 p.m.
weekdays, Thursdays 12:30-4:30 p.m.
Contact: DSN 467-3398

Illesheim Clinic

Hours: Mondays, Tuesdays,
Thursdays, and Fridays, 7:30 a.m.-5
p.m. and Wednesdays 7:30 a.m.-noon.
Contact: DSN 467-4512

Bamberg

Hours: Monday-Friday 7:30 a.m.-
4:30 p.m.
Contact: DSN 469-1750

Grafenwoehr

Hours: Monday-Wednesday 6:30
a.m.-7:30 p.m. Thursday 1-7:30 p.m.
Friday 6:30 a.m.-3 p.m. Saturday 9
a.m.-noon
Contact: DSN 475-7152

Hohenfels

Hours: Monday-Wednesday 7 a.m.-
5 p.m. Thursday 1-5 p.m. Friday 7 a.m.-
5 p.m.
Contact: DSN 466-1750

Schweinfurt

Ledward Clinic
Hours: Monday-Friday 8 a.m.-6 p.m.
Contact: 354-7901

Leighton Clinic

Hours: Monday-Wednesday and
Friday 8 a.m.-3:30 p.m.
Contact: DSN 350-3771

Vilseck

Hours: Monday-Wednesday 7:30
a.m.-7:30 p.m. Thursday 1-7:30 p.m.
Friday 7:30 a.m.-3 p.m. Saturday 9
a.m.-noon
Contact DSN 476-2936

Missions vital, but fun, adventure abound in Bavaria

Grafenwoehr

The U.S. Army's Morale, Welfare, and Recreation program offers everything from bowling, tour services throughout the region and surrounding countries, festivals, a world-class fitness facility, and an American movie theater (<http://www.aafes.com/ems/>) to sporting and entertainment events.

Soldiers can also enjoy shopping on post at the largest post exchange in Europe. The new Army and Air Force Exchange Service PX opened its doors Sept. 26,

2007, alongside a brand new state-of-the art commissary, where consumers can purchase groceries, dairy products, frozen food, meat, produce, health and beauty items, household, and tobacco products at-cost.

The U.S. Army Garrison Grafenwoehr also includes the sub-community of Vilseck, an approximate 15-minute drive from Grafenwoehr. Vilseck also boasts a commissary, movie theater, shopping facilities, sporting, fitness, and entertainment opportunities.

In addition to their award-winning military dining facilities, Grafenwoehr and Vilseck offer several fast food options, including Burger King, Subway, Anthony's Pizza, Popeye's Chicken, Charlie's Grilled Subs, and Baskin Robbins.

While there is much to see and do on post, the area surrounding the installation is what makes being stationed here so special.

What to see and do off post

Bavaria is rich in culture, history, and tradition. It is primarily Roman Catholic, and was first mentioned in writing around 520 A.D. Commonly referred to as Germany's most scenic state, Bavaria borders Austria, the Czech Republic, and Switzerland. Politics within Bavaria are generally more conservative than the rest of Germany.

Bavarians hold close to their traditions because they were an independent state until 1871. They value time spent at their numerous festivals and time spent with family and friends. They also place high value on foods and drinks, many of which can only be found locally in Bavaria. In addition to the Bavarian Weisswurst (white sausage), two Bavarian cities have

bratwursts named after them—Nuremberg and Regensburg.

Bavarians also value their beer, and many times the best meals can be had in a local brewery.

Soldiers who would like to venture out into the picturesque countryside don't have to travel far for top-notch entertainment and activity. Amberg, Bayreuth, and Weiden are the closest larger cities. Weiden (about 20 km from Grafenwoehr with a population of 42,444) has a small pedestrian shopping district and many local and multi-ethnic restaurants to choose from. Bits of history can be revealed around town by walking around the Rathaus, or town hall, and visiting the old churches.

Much like Weiden, Amberg (about 20 km from Vilseck with a population of 44,200) boasts many restaurants, small bars, pubs, and much to see and do. Both cities offer several larger night clubs. The best way to discover both of these cities is to walk their downtown, since many of the downtown areas in Bavarian cities are primarily pedestrian zones.

Many of the Germans in these areas speak some English, so if you have a question, don't be afraid to ask.

The larger and more well-known Bayreuth (about 30 km from Grafenwoehr) has a population of 74,392. The city is best known for its affiliation with Richard Wagner, the world renowned composer who lived there from 1872 until his death in 1883. It is home to the annual Richard Wagner Festival, Bayreuth Opera House, the University of Bayreuth, and many beautiful Baroque parks.

Three larger cities in Bavaria that should be visited are Nuremberg (about 80 km from post), Regensburg (95 km from post), and Munich (220 km from post). Munich is home to 1.3 million people and the largest beer festival in the world—the Oktoberfest. It is the capital of Bavaria, the state's largest city, and Germany's third largest city.

USAG-Garmisch is responsible for Sheridan Kaserne, home of the George C. Marshall Center. A renowned international educational institution dedicated in 1993, the center offers an array of programs and specializes in the promotion of cooperation, trust, and understanding for civilian and military professionals from more than 47 countries and provinces.

Regensburg has a population of 151,000, lies

on the famous Danube River, and has a rich history that dates back to the Stone Age.

Nuremberg has a population of 500,000 and is the home of the most famous of the German Christmas markets, or Christkindlmarkts.

The Rathaus and the Frauenkirche are two of the most prominent architectural features in Munich, and demonstrate the type of buildings that is often seen in other cities in Bavaria. To make traveling easier, an entrance to Germany's largest S-bahn system is located in the Marienplatz in front of the Rathaus.

Photo by Lacie Rector



Courtesy photo

Located in Lower Franconia, which is famous for its wines, downtown Schweinfurt rests on the banks of the Main River that provides beautiful parks and fishing opportunities.

The best way to visit any of these cities is by train. Traveling by train in Germany is an easy and affordable way to enjoy your local area.

The German railway system offers a budget ticket called the "Bavaria ticket," which can be bought for a single person or a group of up to five people. It allows unlimited travel throughout Bavaria and into Salzburg, Austria, for a 24-hour period at a price of 19 to 29 Euros.

Whether you are interested in sightseeing, wine tasting, sports, or the arts, Bavaria has something to offer you!

Garmisch

Nestled in a Bavarian valley surrounded by the majesty of the Bavarian Alps and overlooked by the Zugspitze, the tallest peak in Germany, Garmisch-Partenkirchen is the kind of place that will make you say, "I'm glad I work here!" From the moment you arrive in Garmisch-Partenkirchen you'll realize just what a special place this is.

The U.S. Army Garrison Garmisch military community is a close knit family with Soldiers and civilians pulling together to support each other as they serve their country. The garrison headquarters is located on Artillery Kaserne, a compound originally known as Kraft von Delfmungen built in 1935 to house the specialized mountain corps. After serving as a barracks, hospital, and POW camp for both Allied and German soldiers, the kaserne today is shared with the Gibirgsmusikorps 8, the last of the Germany's Edelweiss soldiers.

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The Middle Franconian region of Bavaria is a somewhat flat, yet rolling terrain. The area might best be described as the foothills of the Alps, which are only two to three hours away and provide marvelous retreats from the daily grind.

The USAG Ansbach Community is made up of several different installations—Katterbach Kaserne, Bismarck Kaserne, Shipton Kaserne, Bleidorn Housing Area and Barton Barracks in the Ansbach area, and Storck Barracks about a half hour away in Illesheim.

Illesheim is located approximately 18 kilometers (11 miles) from Ansbach. Though somewhat small and isolated, Storck Barracks has every life-sustaining facility necessary—commissary, shoppette, bookstore, education center, gas station, gym and library to name a

few. Its small population (nearly 1,200 Soldiers), creates a small-town America atmosphere many residents enjoy.

An elementary-middle school is located in the middle of the housing area. High school students are bused to Ansbach.

Now one of the enduring communities within the European Theater, the USAG Ansbach community might be considered a work in progress. The Army's Whole Neighborhood Renovation Program is improving base housing and much more.

Ansbach and Illesheim are both great communities for families. Army Community Services stresses community involvement through People Encouraging People, and the community volunteer coordinator will assist anyone who wants to engage in fruitful activity. Paid positions are also available through the civilian personnel.

Youth Services programs run year-round and are philosophically slanted toward participation rather than win-at-all-costs competition.

The community theater group at the Terrace Playhouse on Bleidorn consistently presents excellent productions put on by volunteers from the community.

Recreational outlets include three area golf courses that cater to military duffers, fishing, hunting, swimming, bowling, biking, and more Volksmarches and running trails than one can imagine.

The community sports program offers a full slate of team sport activity. And there are two complete, physical fitness centers that are undergoing renovations.

All told, the USAG Ansbach communities of Ansbach and Illesheim offer a small town community atmosphere with modern amenities and a stone's throw from Nuremberg and Austria for those who like the Big City and travel opportunities.

Hohenfels

Hohenfels, home of the Joint Multinational Readiness Center, is located in an especially beautiful rural area part of what is referred to as The Upper Palatinate (Oberpfalz), one of the seven administrative regions of Bavaria.

Check it out!

For more information on the areas listed in this article, go to the following Web sites and click on the appropriate flag for English:

<http://www.schweinfurt-server.de/index.html>

<http://www.wuerzburg.de/en/index.html>

www.amberg.de

www.weiden-oberpfalz.de

www.bayreuth.de

www.nuernberg.de

www.regensburg.de

www.muenchen.de

For more information on your garrison, check out the individual Web sites:

USAG Grafenwoehr: www.grafenwoehr.army.mil

USAG Ansbach: www.ansbach.army.mil

USAG Bamberg: www.bamberg.army.mil

USAG Schweinfurt: www.schweinfurt.army.mil

USAG Hohenfels: www.grafenwoehr.army.mil/hohenfels

USAG Garmisch: www.garmisch.army.mil



Photo by Garry Barrows

The Zum Gulden Stern, a restaurant in downtown Nuremberg, was founded in 1419 and is still in service today.



Photo by Lacie Rector

The Rathaus and the Frauenkirche are two of the most prominent architectural features in Munich, and demonstrate the type of buildings that is often seen in other cities in Bavaria. To make traveling easier, an entrance to Germany's largest S-bahn system is located in the Marienplatz in front of the Rathaus.

Contact your local school liaison officer for new student, school information, tips

Special to the Bavarian News

Read below to find out all of the answers to your DoDDs questions. This list was compiled by the U.S. Army Garrison Grafenwoehr school liaison officer, Ann Bruennig. For more detailed information about individual schools, call the school or your local SLO.

Q. How do I get free or reduced school lunches?

A. To apply, you must take a copy of a current LES of the sponsors and spouse, if employed, to the Child and Youth Services central registration office.

Q. What will determine if my child or children are eligible for free or reduced school lunches?

A. The entire household's income is used to determine if your child/children are eligible for this program. This includes; Kinder Geld, child support payments, retirement and social security payments and spouses income.

The number of family members physically living with the family, to include a deployed service member; however if there is a family member that is residing in the states this member will not be included.

Q. If we live off post, how will my child/children get to school?

A. For those families that live off of the installation there is a local school bus system that will transport students to and from school.

For those students that are active in after school activities at the Vilseck High School there is also a later activity bus, however students must be involved in an organized after school activity.

Q. How do I let the bus office know where we are located and if my child/children need a bus pass?

A. You as a parent need to visit the school bus office on the post where your child will attend school. This is the location that you can sign up for bus services and for your child or children to get a bus pass.

Q. What information do I need to ensure that my child/children or youth can get registered and start school as soon as we arrive?

A. You can start your registration on the Web at <http://www.eu.dodea.edu/schoolregister.htm>, but you will still need to visit the school registration office located at

each individual school. The documents that you will need to have for the enrollment are:

- a copy of the sponsors orders
- child or youth immunization records
- child or youths birth certificate
- child or youths social security card

Q. Are the immunization requirements different for schools overseas than schools in the states?

A. No, requirements are the same as those in the States and as follows:

- Diphtheria, Tetanus, and Pertussis: six doses should be administered by age 11-12
 - Hepatitis A: two doses
 - Hepatitis B: three doses
 - Haemophilus influenzae type B: two to four doses
 - Polio: three doses
 - Meningococcal: one dose at 11-12 years and unvaccinated high school students and college freshmen
 - Measles, Mumps, Rubella: two doses
 - Varicella: one dose at one year, susceptible people age 13 and older should have two doses a least four to eight weeks apart. It is not required if child or youth has had a history of chickenpox.
- PPD TB tine/monovac: Locally determined

Q. What are the graduation requirements for DoDEA?

A. Starting this year for the class of 2008, the graduation requirements are the following:

- four units of English language arts, 9, 10, 11, 12
- three units of social studies
- three units of mathematics
- three units of science
- two units of foreign language
- two units of professional technical studies

- one and a half units of physical education
- one unit of fine arts
- half unit of health education

This equals 20 total required courses and with six elective courses to equal 26 total credits.

Q. How can I give feedback to the schools?

A. There are many ways to give your feedback to the schools! One, you can speak with the teachers. Two, you can speak with the principals. Three, you can speak with the School Liaison Officer. Four, you can write a customer comment card on the Interactive Customer Evaluation, or ICE, system at www.ice.disa.mil under the School Liaison Office.

Ansbach

Ansbach Elementary School

Katterbach Kaserne
Enrollment: 255
Contact: DSN 467-2628 or CIV 09802-7657

Illesheim Elementary School

Storck Barracks
Enrollment: 295
School also has Sure Start and Pre-School Child Development programs
Contact: DSN 467-4731 or CIV 09841-83-4731

Rainbow Elementary School

Barton Barracks

Enrollment: 257
School has Sure Start and PSCD programs
Contact: DSN 468-7806 or CIV 0981-15984

Ansbach Middle/High School

Katterbach Kaserne
Enrollment: 402
School offers a variety of advanced courses, has a counselor for 7th and 8th grades and one for high school—9th through 12th—and also hosts many extracurricular clubs and team sports.

Contact: DSN 467-2808 or CIV 09802-83-2808

Enrollment: 163
Pre-k available in Sure Start
Full-day kindergarten through 8th grade
PSCD = Pre-School for Children with Disabilities
Scheduled to close end of school year

Wuerzburg High School
Contact: DSN 350-7230/7177/7176 or CIV 0931-889-7230/7177/7176
Enrollment: 221
9th through 12th grade
Scheduled to close end of school year

School Liaison Officer
Damon McGibboney
Contact: DSN 354-6057/6974 or CIV 09721-86057/86974

Schweinfurt

Schweinfurt Elementary School

Contact: DSN 354-6734/6518 or CIV 09721-81893

Enrollment: 740
Pre-k available in Sure Start
Full-day kindergarten through 5th grade
PSCD = Pre-School for Children with Disabilities

Schweinfurt Middle School

Contact: DSN 354-6813/6812 or CIV 09721-804301
Enrollment: 252
6-8 grades

Wuerzburg Elementary/Middle School

Contact: DSN 350-7169/6158 or CIV 0931-889-7169

Enrollment: 163
Pre-k available in Sure Start
Full-day kindergarten through 8th grade
PSCD = Pre-School for Children with Disabilities
Scheduled to close end of school year

Wuerzburg High School
Contact: DSN 350-7230/7177/7176 or CIV 0931-889-7230/7177/7176
Enrollment: 221
9th through 12th grade
Scheduled to close end of school year

School Liaison Officer
Damon McGibboney
Contact: DSN 354-6057/6974 or CIV 09721-86057/86974

Bamberg

Bamberg Elementary School
Kindergarten through 6th grade
Enrollment: 619
DSN 469-7616/8615/8884
Principle Sandra Kuplinski

Bamberg High School
Grades 7-12
Enrollment: 299
DSN 469-7630/8874

School Liaison Officer
Kim Kozel
DSN 469-7891
Kimberly.Kozel@eur.army.mil

Vilseck

Vilseck Elementary School
Pre-K through 5th grade, includes Sure Start and other after-school clubs.

Enrollment: 707
Contact: DSN 476-2812 or CIV 09662-83-2812
<http://www.vils-es.eu.dodea.edu>

Vilseck High School
9th through 12th grade, with competitive athletics, JROTC, and Student 2 Student program
Enrollment: 416
Contact: DSN 476-2554/2864 or CIV 09662-83-2554/2864
<http://www.vils-hs.eu.dodea.edu>

Hohenfels

Hohenfels Elementary School:
Principal - Olaf Zwicker
Assistant Principal - Mary Salerno
Counselor - Cynthia Nicholson
Contact: DSN 466-2829 or CIV 09472-83-2829
Enrollment: 450

Hohenfels High School:
Principal - Daniel J. Mendoza
Vice Principal - Candice Wojciechowsky
Counselor Name - Kendon Johnson
Contact: DSN 466-3162 or CIV 09472-83-3162
Enrollment: 289

School Liaison Officer:
Michele Wolff
Dontact: DSN 466-2783 or CIV 09472-83-2783

Grafenwoehr

Grafenwoehr Elementary School
Pre-K through 5th grade, includes Sure Start along with after-school clubs.
Enrollment: 562
Contact: DSN 475-7133 or CIV 09641-83-7133
<http://www.graf-es.eu.dodea.edu>

Grafenwoehr Middle School
6th-8th grade, with math and foreign language high school credits.
Moves to Netzaberg in August 2008.
Enrollment: 442
Contact: DSN 475-9500 or CIV 09641-83-9500
<http://www.graf-ms.eu.dodea.edu>

Netzaberg Elementary School
Opens in August 2008



Vilseck High School Junior Reserve Officer Training Corps cadet Jordan Goree shows off his award-winning routine in May. Several members of the drill team won individual honors at U.S. Army in Europe Department of Defense Dependent Schools finals during the 2006-2007 school year. Many of the cadets at VHS created their own routines, which allowed for fluid, always changing, exhibits. For more information about your local drill team, contact the JROTC instructor at your high school.

Photo by Katie Cowart

CYS, CDC offer programs, support for parents, children at every stage of life

by ANITA PAYNE
Special to the Bavarian News

Child and Youth Services is more than just the Child Development Center!

CYS offers programs and services for children and youth from 6 weeks through 18 years, including youth programs, instructional programs, team sports and individual sports and fitness.

The CDC offers full day care for infants through preschool, part-day preschool and hourly care. Using the "Creative Curriculum" as a planning tool, CDC staff develops activities that teach children basic skills through play.

Activities focus on pre-reading and pre-math skills as well as social-emotional development and creative arts. The CDC offers part-day preschool for 3- and 4-year-olds.

Both Vilseck and Grafenwoehr CDCs have Pre-Kindergarten enrichment classes which help to prepare your 4-year-old for kindergarten.

German and American preschool teachers merge cultural activities to teach children language, songs, games and the arts from both perspectives. CDC's also offer before and after-school programs for kindergarten children as well as those attending DoDDS Sure Start and

Developmental Preschool.

The School-Age Services programs offer before and after school programs for children from 1st-5th grade. SAS programs are also open to children during school breaks and in the summer.

Summer Camp features field trips, swimming, bowling, and exciting outdoor activities. During the school year, SAS provides a homework lab and a youth technology lab in addition to Boys & Girls Clubs of America and 4-H Club activities.

The middle school/teen programs are open after school and on Saturdays for youth in the 6th-12th grades.

CYS staff focuses on programs and activities that build leadership skills encourage volunteerism and prepare youth for college and careers.

A technology specialist is on staff to assist youth in developing their computer skills and educational research skills as well as help with homework.

All MST centers are equipped with game tables, large screen TV's and a wide variety of games; making it a great place to "hang out" with friends.

Youth Sports and Fitness relies on volunteer

coaches to offer team sports. In addition to team sports, Youth Sports and Fitness offers skills camps and individual sports and fitness activities. Many of the health and fitness activities are offered in the SAS and MST programs, so parents don't have to transport children to another activity.

CYS Outreach Service coordinates special openings at unit request for unit functions, FRG meetings and respite as well as deployment support services. Outreach Services includes Central Enrollment Registration, Youth Education and Support Services, and SKIES Unlimited.

SKIES Unlimited contracts with instructors to offer classes in four schools: arts, recreation and leisure; academic skills, mentoring and intervention; life skills, citizenship and leadership; and sports, fitness, and health. Whether your child is interested in ballet, taekwon-do or yoga, SKIES Unlimited has something for every child and youth.

All CYS programs use the "Character Counts!" curriculum to teach children the six pillars of character: trustworthiness, respect, responsibility, fairness, caring, and citizenship. These concepts are integrated into every area of the curriculum in each of our programs.

Parent involvement is key to the success of any program for children and youth. CYS involves parents through Parent Advisory Councils and other committees.

Parents can earn "participation points" that can accumulate toward fee discounts in our programs. CYS also offers Parent Education classes on a variety of topics.

CYS will open two new facilities in 2008 in the Netzaburg community. Conveniently located beside the new elementary school, the Child Development Center/School Age Services building will accommodate 303 children.

Adjacent to the middle school, the new youth center will house SKIES programs and have enough space for 198 youth. The addition of these new facilities will result in more exciting programs for the children and youth in the USAG Grafenwoehr community.

CYS encourages all parents to register with Central Enrollment Registry and take advantage of the many programs and services for children and youth in our community.

CER offices are located in Grafenwoehr (Bldg. 531, DSN 475-6655), Vilseck (Bldg. 224, DSN 476-2760), and Hohenfels (Bldg. 96, DSN 466-2078). For more CYS and CDC contact information, see the box below.



Photo by Katie Cowart

EFMP, EDIS offer special needs support

Other services are also available for families with special needs children. Army Community Services and Educational and Intervention Services offer the Exceptional Family Member Program, which also serves as a support group for the parents of special needs children. Within the group, children get the extra attention and help they need to optimize development, and parents get a little bit of relief in knowing they are not alone. For more on the program, call your local ACS.

Hi-speed Internet access is NOT available in most locations. The garrison command cannot require residents or townships to provide it.

Off-post residents are encouraged to talk to and join up with their local neighbors to find out how they can request it from a service provider in their area!

Contact numbers

Ansbach

Child Youth Services
DSN 467-2917 or CIV 09802-83-2917
Child Development Centers
Katterbach Kaserne: DSN 467-2828 or
CIV 09802-83-2828
Storck Barracks: DSN 467-4821 or
CIV 09841-83-4821
Central Enrollment Registration
Katterbach: DSN 467-2533
Storck Barracks: DSN 467-4880

Bamberg

Central Enrollment and Registration
DSN 469-7716 or CIV 0951-300-7716
Hourly Child Care
DSN 469-8789 or CIV 0951-300-8789
Family Child Care
DSN 469-8660 or CIV 0951-300-8660
Child Development Center
DSN 469-8789 or CIV 0951-322-75

Garmisch

DSN 440-2684
CIV 08821-750-2684

Grafenwoehr

CDC
DSN 475-7180 or CIV 09641-83-7180
CYS
DSN 475-6655/6656 or CIV 09641-83-6655/6656

Hohenfels

CYS
DSN 466-2822/2221 or CIV 09472-83-2822/2221
CDC
DSN 466-4706/4707 or CIV 09472-83-4706/4707
Central Registration
DSN 466-2078/2080 or CIV 09472-83-2078/2080

Schweinfurt

Central Registration, Ledward Barracks
DSN 354-6517/6414 or CIV 09721-96-6517/6414

Vilseck

CDC
DSN 476-2651 or CIV 09662-83-2651
Central Registration
DSN 476-2760 or CIV 09662-83-2760

Wuerzburg

Central Registration, Leighton Barracks
DSN 350-7762 or CIV 0931-889-7762

Scenic local roads ideal for leisure riding

by BOB McGAFFIN

USAG Grafenwoehr Safety Specialist

For those of you who are motorcyclists, the opportunities for world class touring are endless.

Not only does Bavaria offer great destinations but it is also one of the cheaper areas in Germany to travel in. Hotel accommodations in scenic areas can be found for as little as 22 Euros a day and that includes breakfast.

The Alps are only three hours away and are filled with fellow motorcyclists from all over Europe during the riding season. As a testament to the beautiful scenery, some tour companies charge up to \$8,000 for a two-week vacation, and that doesn't include airfare.

All of this beauty and opportunity does not come without a price. Typical country roads can be challenging and downright dangerous for the uninformed or inexperienced rider.

Secondary roads

It is unusual to find advisory speed road signs on secondary roads. In Germany there are set speed limits, depending on the type of road, and are not normally posted unless there is a reduction in speed for a specific feature or road construction.

This simply means that you are very likely to encounter 30 mph curves on 60 mph roads with no warning or markings. This has been the Achilles heel for many Soldiers stationed here.

Slowing down to a reasonable speed, paying close attention to lane position and accelerating slowly out of the turn when you can see the exit are survival skills, not something that you can forget. "Excessive speed for road conditions" is a common phrase on accident reports.

Oh – did I forget to tell you that many of the rural roads do not have centerline markings because they are only 14 feet wide?

German car drivers are aggressive



Photo by Katie Cowart

Traveling by motorcycle is a great way to see the countryside, but riders must take a motorcycle safety course before being licensed to drive in Germany.

and expect motorcyclists to be skilled enough to move over close to the shoulder in an oncoming passing situation. Remember that lane position that we talked about?

Strict testing

A German motorcyclist must pay between 800 and 1,000 € for a motorcycle endorsement, and the training process includes 39 hours of road instruction in all weather conditions, and a written test from a 5,000 question databank.

That entitles you to operate a 250cc motorcycle for the first two years. After that you can buy something bigger. As you can see, their training

is a lot more comprehensive than what you may have received back in the states. Remember that when you try and keep up with a group of European bikers.

Protection

Most riders believe in buying good quality protective equipment and they wear it religiously.

Of course, the weather makes that possible as we see the 80's maybe one week out of the year so you don't have the heat factors that are typical in the U.S.

Typical riding season weather is between 50 and 70 degrees Fahrenheit, and the season typically

runs from April 1 to Nov. 1.

Similar to Washington state but with more snow and cold during the winter months. It is not unusual to see snow in the Alps as late as July so proper clothing is the key to staying warm and alert.

The other common weather condition is rain. There are no dry seasons in Bavaria and being properly equipped is essential to enjoying the ride.

The good news is that quality gear is cheap and readily available through several national retailers with multiple store outlets throughout Bavaria.

AE 190-1 is the regulation that

Don't hit the road until you know area laws

by MICHAEL SCHWARZ

Grafenwoehr Garrison Safety Director

Drivers should be aware of the many peculiarities while driving in Bavaria. Historically, Bavaria was considered a low traffic area.

With the many changes over the past few years, this is no longer true. Traffic has increased 200 percent and the area has become a major thoroughfare between east and west Europe.

Most of the roadways used to commute to and from our installations are narrow, winding, and therefore dangerous roads to speed on, even in the best weather and road conditions.

Winter Driving

During the winter months roads freeze and fog up very quickly. Even in the best weather and road conditions, the posted speed limits are often too fast. Driving defensively is the only way to survive this road without having an accident.

Adjust to driving conditions. The posted speed limits are usually meant for ideal conditions such as dry pavement and perfect visibility.

If conditions are less than perfect, slow down and allow extra time. Cars don't stop or turn as quickly on wet, snowy, or icy roads.

Be aware of drastic changes in road conditions as you drive. Hills or even slight grades (where surfaces afford slow runoff of water) may be clear on one side and icy on the other.

Before you start up or down a hill, shift to the lowest gear needed. Be prepared for unseen hazards.

“Driving defensively is the only way to survive this road without having an accident.”

7.

Autobahn traffic often slows to a standstill (Stau), throughout the year, particularly during the summer vacation season. Trips should be planned to account for lengthy delays.

Highways or "Bundes Strasse" often experience heavy traffic densities.

These roads tend to run through more densely wooded areas in Bavaria and hazards of fog or ice may appear abruptly on a normally dry road.

These changes must be anticipated when approaching forested areas and especially bridges.

Bavaria is renowned for its abundance of wildlife. Animals crossing rural roadways must also be anticipated, particularly during winter months.

Bavaria is also a large agricultural region and slow farming traffic can be expected everywhere.

Throughout Germany, there are strict legal requirements while operating a motor vehicle on German roads.

Speed Limits

Although there is no speed limit on German autobahns, unless posted, 130 km/h (81 MPH) is recommended by German authorities.

Twenty-five percent of all fatal automobile accidents in Germany are caused by high speeds and ten percent occur on the autobahns. Excessive speed kills.

Extreme caution and prudence should be exercised when driving on autobahns. Within city limits, the speed is 50 km/h (31 miles) and in housing areas, 30 km/h (18.5 miles) is either posted or recommended. On all other roads the speed is limited to 100 km/h (62 MPH).

The right lane must always be used except when passing. On autobahns, this restriction also applies to the center lane.

Special Requirements

Many European countries now require you to have reflective vests in your vehicle and you must wear the vest when departing your vehicle along side the autobahn.

In fog, if visibility falls below 50 meters (164 ft), speed must be reduced to 50 km/h (31 MPH). Distances may be judged from the reflecting poles which line both sides of the road and are spaced 50m (164 ft) apart.

Children up to the age of 12, as well as pets, are authorized only in the rear seats.

In Germany, children age 12 and shorter than 150 cm (4'9") must use a suitable restraint system approved by the Economic Commission for Europe or U.S. Department of Transportation.

All occupants must wear seat belts at all times.

Autumn season presents a number of road hazards that drivers should be aware of. This is the time to get ready for cold weather driving.

Winterize your vehicle before really cold weather sets in. Ensure your car is in good running condition. If it is running a little rough, now is a good time for a tune-up.

Don't forget to check your coolant system. Are the heater and defroster working properly? Windshield wipers get plenty of use during winter months. Make sure they are in good condition.

Tire Rules

Tires should always be checked especially in winter. Remember that low tire pressure does not increase traction.

It is common practice in Germany to install winter and summer tires prior to those seasons.

If you are involved in an accident, German

police will determine whether your tires are appropriate for the given road conditions. Remember, you must have the right tire for the right road condition. All-season tires are adequate, but are not the best for driving in Germany.

The International Motor Vehicle Lighting Equipment Campaign is conducted each year in October to

governs the vehicle licensing and registration process for U.S. Army Forces in Europe and sets the minimum standards for clothing while operating a motorcycle.

Requirements

One of the requirements is that motorcyclists attend a MSF course every three years. MSF courses are offered monthly at all military communities in Bavaria.

If you are approaching the three-year window or cannot find your completion card, consider renewing your training before reporting to your duty station.

You will not be able to obtain a U.S. Army Europe motorcycle endorsement without a MSF course completion card.

The other piece of bad news is that you may not obtain the initial training required to obtain a stateside motorcycle license endorsement through a USAEUR installation MSF program in Germany.

In other words, if you want to learn how to ride a motorcycle, either complete the training before you arrive or be prepared to pay for the German instruction and licensing process, not that bad of a deal when you consider the quality and quantity of instruction.

Our MSF courses are taught by qualified MSF rider coaches, and we are always on the lookout for volunteers who exhibit the right mental skills to successfully administer motorcycle instruction.

Although there are contracted instructors for our normal monthly trainings, the success of our motorcycle safety program rests with trained active duty personnel that can offer their commanders in-house expertise.

Interested personnel should contact their local garrison safety office for information on enrolling in MSF Rider Coach certification courses.

correct deficiencies prior to the more hazardous winter driving season.

This is the time when hours of darkness increase and winter road and

weather conditions begin. German garages, AAFES Car Care Centers, and most U.S. Forces Vehicle Inspection Stations will be conducting courtesy inspections to check vehicle

lighting systems to include headlights, taillights, fog lights, and turn signals.

In addition to the lighting inspection, AAFES Car Care Centers will also inspect windshield wipers, exhaust systems, and tires.

Trip Planning

If planning a trip, you might want to carry a "Survival Kit". Getting stuck in a traffic jam for several hours is not uncommon in Germany.

Carry extra blankets, flashlight, water, non-perishable foods, and booster cables. It could be a long wait!

Road Conditions

USAREUR has developed a standard method of classifying winter road conditions based on the weather and its effects on the driving conditions.

When road conditions are less than ideal, the current condition is broadcast over the AFN Radio network.

Calling DSN 475-ROAD or CIV 09641-83-ROAD offers the same updates to weather conditions.

“You must have the right tire for the given road conditions.”

Driving

Traffic fines and points

SPEED	EURO		POINTS		SUSPENSION (MONTHS)		
	KM/H OVER	inside city limits	outside city limits	inside city limits	outside city limits	inside city limits	outside city limits
up to 10	15	10					
11-15	25	20					
16-20	35	30					
21-25	50	40	1	1			
26-30	60	50	3	3			
31-40	100	75	3	3	1		
41-50	125	100	4	3	1	1	
51-60	175	150	4	4	2	1	
61-70	300	275	4	4	3	2	
OVER 70	425	375	4	4	3	3	

Offense	Punishable Law AER 190-1
Driving a USAREUR-plated vehicle without a license	90 days ineligible for a USAREUR license
Operating intoxicated 0.05 to 0.079 g/100ml	90 day suspension of license
Operating intoxicated 0.08 to 0.1 g/100ml	License revoked indefinitely. Petitions for reinstatement authorized after one year.
Driving while revoked, suspended, or ineligible	Five year revocation of license.

Make sure car is clean, top shape to ship from U.S.

by SANDRA WILSON
Bavarian News

After receiving your orders to move to a new duty station, your first stop is the transportation office. If you are entitled to the government shipment of a vehicle, this office will give you all the information needed to prepare your vehicle.

When entitled, the government will ship your vehicle at no charge to the nearest Vehicle Processing Center to your next duty station.

It is possible to request an alternate shipment location. If your choice is not en route to your duty station, charges may be incurred.

Check with your VPC to find out your options.

“ The United States Department of Agriculture allows no dirt, leaves, or other plant matter to be carried into other countries via your vehicle. ”

Before dropping off your vehicle to be shipped, several things must be completed.

Your vehicle must be emptied of all possessions except those that are essential to keep with the vehicle like documents, maps, manuals, maintenance tools, spare tire, or child car seats.

The vehicle must be thoroughly vacuumed and cleaned.

The United States Department of Agriculture allows no dirt, leaves, or other plant matter to be carried into countries via your vehicle.

Your vehicle must not have any oil or transmission leaks and it's important that the emergency brake works at 100 percent.

Upon drop off, the vehicle must not contain more than one-fourth tank of gas.

Vehicles must also have two stickers. The

Department of Transportation/manufacturer label is commonly located in the engine compartment usually by the top left corner of the engine.

The Environmental Protection Agency label can be found in the door frame and it states that the vehicle conforms to all federal safety and anti-theft standards.

In the event that one or both stickers are missing, contact your nearest VPC to find the steps to resolve the problem.

Completing all the above tasks will minimize the possibility of your vehicle being rejected when brought to the processing center. Once the stamp of approval is obtained, your car will be on its way to your next duty station.

Knowing procedure can make picking up vehicle easier

by SANDRA WILSON
Bavarian News

Upon arriving at a new duty station, perhaps one of the most pressing issues is how to get around base and the community. For this reason, arrival of your shipped vehicle is of great importance.

Shipping a vehicle from the States to Germany can take anywhere from 40 days, if from the East Coast, to 75 days if from Alaska or Hawaii.

Since you may arrive at your new duty station before your vehicle does, it's a good idea to check in with the nearest Vehicle Processing Center to give them your current contact information and check on the status of your

vehicle shipment.

When the wait is over and your vehicle has arrived, a few tips are helpful to know in order to make the pick up process quick and easy. Authorization to pick up the vehicle is only given to the sponsor with orders, otherwise, anyone else, even a spouse, must have a power of attorney for the vehicle to be released.

The first step must take place at the POV Registration Office. You will need your vehicle's shipping document; title or stateside registration; proof of insurance; military I.D. card;

USAREUR driver's license; and a check, money order, or credit card to pay the fee of \$30. Once registration is completed, you will receive German license plates.

“ Authorization to pick up the vehicle is only given to the sponsor with orders. ”

This is the time to report if any damage to your vehicle was incurred during transit or if anything was stolen. If there is damage or if items were stolen from

the vehicle, a quick claim can be filed on site for up to \$1,000.

If the company agrees with the damage you record, the claim can be paid that very same day.

“ This isn't free money, ” said Fatih Yuksek, VPC area manager located in Mannheim, emphasizing that damage or theft claims must be valid and approved.

If a claim must be made over \$1,000 or if hidden damages are found at a later date, the VPC will provide you with proper paperwork to file the claim via mail.

The VPC can assist in attaching license plates and airing up tires if needed.

Be sure to take advantage of the free same-day carwash before driving your vehicle home.

ADAC

The Allgemeiner Deutscher Automobil Club, or ADAC, is the German Version of our American Automotive Association, better known as AAA.

For an annual fee, motorists can join ADAC, or any emergency overseas roadside service organization, for extra driving protection.

For more information on ADAC, do an Internet search for “Allgemeiner Deutscher Automobil Club” and click on “Translate Page,” beside the search results.

Or call the ADAC Autoverleih Ach in nearby Weiden:

**24-hour telephone number: 0180-222-2222
Web address: www.autoverleih-ach.de.**



Chapel Information

Chaplain offers religious support, welcomes families

Greetings from the Grafenwoehr Garrison Chaplain, On behalf of the U.S. Army Garrison Commander, Col. Brian Boyle, welcome.

We are excited about your arrival to beautiful Bavaria and being a part of a vibrant, dynamic religious community.

I trust that your time here will be enriching both spiritually and personally.

Our religious support staff stand ready to serve your religious needs in providing a

comprehensive program across our various communities.

Should you need any information please don't hesitate to contact our garrison RSO office at DSN (314) 475-1370 or CIV 09641-83-1370.

Again, I look forward to meeting you in the near future and if we can assist you and your family in any way, let us know.

*Col. David P. Hillis
Chaplain, U. S. Army
Garrison Grafenwoehr*

Chapels host wide variety of ministries

Religious Support Activities

- Worship Services
- Rites, Sacraments, and Ordinances
- Religious Education
- Religious Literature, Scriptures
- Memorial Services and Ceremonies

- Deployment and Reunion Support
- Family Life Ministries
- Crisis Intervention
- Counseling (Pastoral, Personal, Administrative, Family)
- Stress Management and Suicide Prevention and Intervention
- Moral Leadership Training

See the list of individual chapel services below for more information on what the chapel can do for you.

Pastoral Care and Counseling

- Ministry of Presence and Troop Visitation



Courtesy art

Military chapels serve as a place of worship for service members, civilians, and their families. They add consistency in an ever-changing military environment.

Religious Services

Ansbach

Katterbach Services

- Catholic Service: 9 a.m.
 - Protestant: 11 a.m.
 - Episcopal/Anglican: 1 p.m.
 - Church of God in Christ: 2:30 p.m.
 - Hispanic Pentecostal: 4:30 p.m.
- Call DSN 467-2785 or CIV 09802-83-2785.

Illesheim services

- Protestant service: 10 a.m.
 - Catholic Service: 11:45 a.m.
- Call DSN 467-4642 or CIV 09841-83-4642.

Bamberg Warner Barracks

DSN 469-1570

On call Chaplains can be reached through EOC at DSN 469-8393/8394

- Catholic Mass: Sunday, 9 a.m., Tuesday, 11:30 a.m., Friday, noon. All services at the chapel.

■ Free Gospel Services: Sunday, 11 a.m., at Preston Hall.

■ Protestant Services: Sunday, 11 a.m., at the chapel.

■ Church of God in Christ Services: Sunday, 12:45 p.m., at the Chapel.

Garmisch

Chaplain (Maj.) Richard Pacania - DSN 440-2519 or CIV 0162-297-5997,
Richard.pacania@us.army.mil, Protestant Chaplain

Master Sgt. Robert Spiegel, Contractor - DSN 440-2736, Robert.spiegel@us.army.mil, contract Priest

Miki Tedesco, Contractor - DSN 440-2819, Sharon.tedesco@eur.army.mil, Religious Administrative Support Assistant

Helen Miklautz, Contractor - 440-2819, info@miklautz.de, Protestant Religious Education Coordinator.

Mass Schedule

- Saturday: 4:30 p.m. Vigil Mass
- Sunday: 9 a.m.
- Weekdays: 12:15 p.m. in the Blessed Sacrament Chapel (sacristy)

- Reconciliation by appointment: Saturdays, 3:30-4 p.m.
- Mass is celebrated at the USAG Garmisch community chapel on Sheridan Kaserne.
- Extras**
- Saturday: PMOC Breakfast (second Saturday only)
- Soldier Luncheons second Wednesday of each month at Dolomiti Restaurant—Noon
- Youth Ministry Friday, Middle School Club, new Community Room – 2:30 p.m., For more information, contact the Club Beyond Community Director, CIV 0171-279-6529.
- General Protestant**
- Sunday: 10:45 a.m., in the Sanctuary
- Sunday school: 9:30 a.m.

Grafenwoehr Community

DSN 475-1570

Catholic Congregation

- Confession - In the BSC 8:30 a.m.- Sunday Mornings,

■ Sunday Mass: 9 a.m.

■ Tuesday Mass: 12:15 p.m.

General Protestant

Congregation

- Sunday Worship: 10:30 a.m.

■ Sunday School: 9 a.m.

Church of Christ

1-3 p.m.

Additional opportunities

- Protestant Women of the Chapel: 9-11:30 a.m. - Chapel Annex Thursdays. *Free Child Care*. 5:30-7 p.m. Wednesday (no child care).

■ Protestant Men of the Chapel:

11:45 a.m. - 12:45 p.m. - Lunch Bible Study

■ Youth Activities: 5:45 - 8 p.m. Tuesday - HS/ Vilseck Chapel, 3:30 - 5 p.m. Wednesday - MS/ Cafeteria, 7:30 a.m. HS Bible Study VHS Cafeteria

Hohenfels

- Religious Support Operation Center: Phone: DSN 466-1570 or CIV 09472-83-1570. Hours: Monday-Friday: 8 a.m.-5 p.m.

■ Chapel Annex: Phone: DSN 466-3575/3576 or CIV 09472-83-3575/3576. Hours: Make



arrangements through RSOC.

■ Family Life and Youth Center: Phone: DSN 466-4793 or CIV 09472-83-4793. Hours: Monday-Friday: 8 a.m.-5 p.m.

■ Family Life Chaplain: Phone: DSN 466-4795 or CIV 09472-83-4795. Hours: Call for an appointment

■ Hilltop Chapel Center: Phone: DSN 466-1570 or CIV 09472-83-1570. Hours: Monday-Friday: 8 a.m.-5 p.m.

■ Nainhof Chapel: Phone: DSN 466-4889/4880 or CIV 09472-83-4889/4880. Hours: Make arrangements through RSOC.

■ On-call chaplain: DSN 466-2819/4519 or CIV 09472-83-2819/4519

■ Post Chapel: Phone: DSN 466-2226/2797 or CIV 09472-83-2226/2797. Hours: Make arrangements through RSOC.

Schweinfurt

Sunday Services held at Ledward Chapel CIV 09721-96-1570 (DSN 354-1570). Free childcare is provided for all Sunday services except Protestant traditional on Conn Barracks.

■ Protestant Worship: 9 a.m.

■ Catholic CCD: 9 a.m.

■ Protestant Sunday School: 10:40 a.m.

■ Catholic Mass: 11 a.m.

■ Gospel Service: 12:30 p.m.

■ Protestant traditional Worship: 11 a.m. (no childcare) at Conn Chapel

Other Schweinfurt Programs

■ Protestant Women of the Chapel meets Wednesdays 9-11:30 a.m. and Tuesday evenings 5:30-7 p.m. throughout the school year, both at Ledward Chapel with childcare provided.

■ Catholic Women of the Chapel meets every second and fourth Tuesday of the month from 9:30-11:30 a.m. throughout the school year at the Ledward Chapel with childcare provided.

■ Club Beyond meets for Schweinfurt Middle Schoolers: Tuesdays 5:30 - 7 p.m. at Ledward Teen Center. Contact Sara Doughty at CIV 0160-332-1498 or CIV 0160-331-9404 or e-mail popnotsoda@hotmail.com.

Wuerzburg

Sunday Services at Leighton Chapel CIV 0931-889-1570 (DSN 350-1570). Free childcare is provided for all Sunday services except Lutheran.

- Catholic Mass: 9 a.m.
- Catholic CCD: 10:30 a.m.
- Protestant Worship: 10:30 a.m.
- Episcopal/Lutheran: noon (no childcare)

Other Wuerzburg Programs

■ Protestant Women of the Chapel satellite study takes place Wednesdays at 9:30 a.m. at the Leighton Chapel with free childcare provided.

■ Club Beyond meets for Wuerzburg Middle Schoolers: Tuesdays 5:30-7 p.m. Leighton Bldg. 88. High Schoolers: Wednesdays 5:30-7 p.m. Leighton Bldg. 88. Rides are provided to Ledward and Askren after Club. Contact Sara Doughty at CIV 0160-332-1498 or CIV 0160-331-9404 or e-mail popnotsoda@hotmail.com.

Vilseck Community

DSN 476-1570

■ Catholic Congregation Confession - In the BSC 11-11:15 a.m.- Sunday Morning

■ Sunday Mass: 11:30 a.m.-12:30 p.m.

■ Wednesday Mass: 12:15 p.m.

■ CCD Protestant Congregation: 1:30-3 p.m.

■ Sunday Service: 9-10 a.m.

■ Sunday School: 10:20 - 11:20 a.m.

■ Episcopal/Lutheran Worship: 10:30 - 11:30 a.m.

Additional Opportunities

■ Protestant Women of the Chapel: 9-11:30 a.m. - Bible Study Tuesdays *Free Child Care*

■ MCCW: noon-1 p.m. - Wednesday *Free Child Care*

■ Vilseck Men of the Chapel: 8-10 a.m. - Breakfast, praise, worship, and study, second and fourth Saturday each month.

Moving doesn't mean leaving favorite shows

by Spc. DARCY SHEPPARD

AFN Bavaria

Most residents in on or off-post government-leased housing have satellite service available in their building, home, or apartment.

According to AFN Bavaria broadcast technician Albert Wiesent, residents can connect their television to an outlet and run the television set-up to tune into AFN's 10 free American channels.

"And if they hook up their radio to a central antennae system, they will also have the ability to tune into 10 radio services," said Wiesent.

AFN Channels

- AFN Prime Pacific
- AFN Prime Atlantic
- AFN Xtra
- AFN News
- AFN Sports
- AFN Spectrum
- Pentagon Channel
- AFN Family
- AFN Movie

Customers can visit www.afneurope.net for a complete program schedule.

Residents in government leased housing receive the AFN channels free of charge.

Wiesent said if viewers would like more channels, they can purchase cable through a contractor, which can provide some pay-per-view channels for a fee, and some German channels at no additional charge.

Residents in private (non-government) rentals must already have or purchase a small satellite dish and American Forces Radio and

Television Service decoder in order to receive the AFN channels.

"In many of the off-post private rentals, the satellite dishes are already present. A decoder can be purchased (or leased) from an AAFES store (for less than \$300) and you can set it up yourself," said Wiesent.

Dishes can also be purchased from personnel PCSing from Germany.

The Bavarian News' and Stars & Stripes' free classified ads list used decoders and satellites at lower prices.

Wiesent said many people are able to set up the dish without professional help. With directions, a compass, and a little bit of technical savvy, he said residents can link their dish to AFN's Hot Bird satellite.

He said the dish set-up should be exact so that the adverse weather conditions do not disrupt the signal. Instructions come with the equipment.

For additional guidance on satellite and decoder set-up, visit www.afneurope.net and click on the FAQs link on the left hand side.

Residents can also get answers to technical questions or help with their AFN decoders by calling an AFN Europe technologist, on duty 24/7 at the AFNE Network Operations Center in Mannheim, Germany at DSN 389-4444 (49-621-46085-444).

From Germany, dial 0621-46085-444 or e-mail noc@afne.army.mil. You will need to provide your decoder TID and UA number, which can be found on the back panel of the decoder.

If residents decide to install a satellite on a private rental, Wiesent suggested obtaining the landlord's permission first.

Play that funky music...



Photo by Katie Cowart

Spc. Nate Jones, host of the AFN Bavaria morning show, introduces the next song. AFN plays a variety of music throughout the day to suit the diverse population of the Bavarian military communities. Many live shows also feature guests bringing in important information on upcoming events or news from downrange.

Live shows also go on location for special events such as German-American fests, bazaars, facility openings, or training exercises. You can catch the local news segment on the radio at half past the hour.

AFN Franconia

AFN Franconia has a total of six radio and two TV transmitter locations throughout the Franconia region. Most communities only receive one radio signal, either AM or FM.

Since the AM signal is stronger, all "live" radio shows are broadcast on the AM frequencies. In Illesheim, which only receives the FM signal, the AM program is simulcast on 104.9 FM. The following AFN Franconia radio frequencies service the communities listed below:

Location	AM	FM
Ansbach	1485	107.3
Bamberg	1143	
Illesheim		104.9
Schweinfurt	1143	
Wuerzburg	1143	104.9

Station phone number: DSN 350-7142/7411/7345

AFN provides source for winter weather updates

Winter in Germany is generally long, cold, and snowy. Bad weather is almost guaranteed.

So where can you turn for the latest weather warnings, road conditions, and school delays and closures?

Tune into the AFN Bavaria live radio shows. During the winter months, our morning show runs from 5 to 10 a.m. and the afternoon show from 2 to 6 p.m.

The deejays will make inclement weather announcements every five to seven minutes.

Outside of our live shows, we continue to run weather related information throughout the day on both our AM and FM radio signals.

Our Web site also has up-to-date information. If you log onto www.afneurope.net/bavaria and click on "Road Conditions and School Closures," you'll find the most current information.

AFN brings hometown tunes to overseas posts

by Spc. DARCY SHEPPARD
AFN Bavaria

Like most Soldiers, Spc. Kenia Kraus' day starts bright and early at 6:30 a.m. with physical training. Unlike most Soldiers, her day often ends by saying goodbye to thousands of people.

Kraus is one of five broadcasters who work at American Forces Network Bavaria, one of 11 affiliates Europe-wide. Their mission is to provide quality information and entertainment to an audience of thousands living in Grafenwoehr, Vilseck, Hohenfels, and Garmisch.

"It's definitely demanding because both jobs demand a lot of you. Soldiering you have to be physically fit. You've got to maintain your PT average; you've got to shoot well. Especially here at AFN Bavaria we really care about maintaining our Soldiering skills," Kraus said.

The other thing AFN Bavaria cares about is getting information out to the community. They do that with live local deejay shows from 5 to 10 a.m. and from 2 to 6 p.m. The deejays, including Kraus on some days, say they understand the importance of their job.

"When you're on the air... you want to talk to (the community) like you're sitting right next to them. A big part of our job is to give them information as to what's going on in our community," said Kraus. "They start relying on you, and they kind of like depend on you to get their information out."

While radio is a big part of AFN Bavaria, so



Kraus

is television. Kraus can be seen anchoring the Bavaria Update Newscast. It's a seven-minute segment that airs weekday evenings at 6:23 and 10:23 p.m. on AFN Prime Atlantic or Channel 17 on AFN decoders.

"You stand in front of a camera and have to read a teleprompter and realize that people are going to be watching; it makes you very nervous," Kraus laughs.

Radio and television aren't the only services AFN Bavaria offers. Kraus logs on to get most of her information; it's AFN Bavaria's Web site, www.afneurope.net/bavaria. It's loaded with updated traffic and weather information, school delays and closures, a community calendar, the newscast and other stories, along with a plethora of other helpful links.

"Amazingly enough, our Web site not only has community events listed on there, but you can get your weather, you can get traffic. And the best part about it is you can download video from it and keep your own personal archive. The more a person visits it, the more we feel supported by the community," Kraus said.

Kraus' day ends around 5:30 p.m. As if she hasn't worked long enough, sometimes, the job even demands that she work on the weekends.

"I've got to admit I complain," Kraus laughs, "and then as soon as I'm out there, I'm covering the story. I'm motivated by the people, by the event, by the situation. And I forget, and it really becomes that selfless service nature of it... You forget about your own problems and realize that you're here for the community."

It's that kind of attitude that helped AFN Bavaria earn five of the coveted Department of Defense Thomas Jefferson awards in just two years. The AFN Bavaria team also won "Station of the Year" for 2006, beating out five other AFN stations.



Look for AFN online at www.afneurope.net/bavaria, or on the radio!

AFN Bavaria Radio Frequencies

Town	AM	FM	Grafenwoehr	1107	101.4
Amberg	1107	90.0	Hohenfels	1485	89.4
Chiemsee		90.3	Nuremberg		107.4
Garmisch	1485	90.3	Katterbach		107.4
			Vilseck	1107	107.6

Wondering about your new mail system?

Here are answers to the most common questions

Q: How will I be assigned a mailbox in the community?

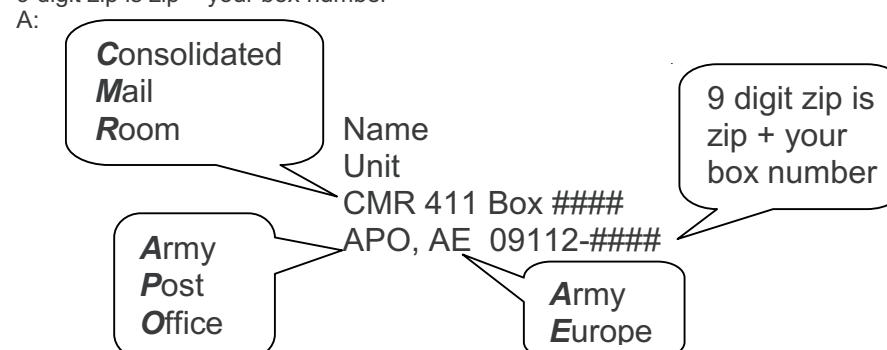
A: We will receive a list of the personnel that are coming in as unit move, and we will issue mailboxes in advance so that you can start to send mail and to notify all correspondences of the new mailing address. Those coming in as individual replacements, and not part of the unit move, will be issued a box once in country when they in-process.

Q: Will I have a combo or key?

A: All of our mailboxes use combinations.

Q: What information composes my new mailing address?

9 digit zip is zip + your box number



Q: What's my city? What's my state?

A: City is APO.State is AE. If you are ordering off the Web and AE is not an option, use NY and enter the city as APO AE.

Q: Can I receive mail at my house or at my government quarters?

A: Mail that comes to the CMR will not be delivered to your physical address. It is only delivered to your CMR box number. The local Bundespost (German Post Office) does not deliver to on post housing or government quarters. If you live off post, you can have mail sent to your physical address if you wish, but it will cost more if coming from the states. Your local phone and energy bills can be sent to the physical address off post.

Q: Do I need to include Germany in my address?

A: No. Do not include Germany in your address. If you do, and someone sends you something from the States, they may have to pay the international rate rather than domestic rate for the mail.

Q: Do the cards I fill out when I in process notify others of my change in address or do I need to notify all my correspondences?

A: The cards that you fill out at the CMR are for our records and for the APO records only. The cards in no way notify others of your new address. You will need to contact all of your correspondences of your correct address as well as your previous servicing Post Office.

Q: How many mailboxes are authorized for me and my family?

A: One per sponsor. If both spouses are military, then they are authorized a mailbox each, however, we recommend one per family.

Q: Do I have to list all of my command sponsored dependents?

A: Yes, if we receive mail for dependents that are not listed, or that do not match dependents that we have listed, then the mail will be returned to sender as "Attempted Not Known".

Q: If something has the wrong or incomplete address and arrives at the CMR, will I still get it?

A: Yes, so long as we have the name in our system, we will redirect the item to the correct mailbox.

Q: How long will it take before I get mail at my new address?

A: After you have notified the USPS of your change of address, it could take about a week for mail to begin arriving at your new address. Several factors will have an impact:

* How far in advance did you notify the USPS of your move? (We recommend that you notify the USPS at least two weeks before your move date.)

* What date did you request to have your mail forwarded?

* How far did you move?

Q: How long will the post office forward my mail and what are the costs?

A: First-Class Mail®, Priority Mail®, and Express Mail®: All forwarded for 12 months at no charge. Periodicals: Forwarded for 60 days at no charge (includes newspapers and magazines).

Standard Mail (formerly Standard Mail A): Not forwarded unless requested by the mailer. These items include circulars, books, catalogs, and advertising mail weighing less than 16 ounces.

Package Services (formerly Standard Mail B): Forwarded locally for 12 months at no charge. Additional forwarding charges are paid by you if you move outside the local area (includes packages weighing 16 ounces or more not mailed as Priority Mail®).

Special Services: Certified, insured, registered, or special handling mail is forwarded without additional special service fees when mail is being forwarded to a domestic address only. Mail is subject to the applicable postage for each specific service.

Note: COD, Delivery Confirmation, Signature Confirmation are not possible at APO's.

Q: How does mail get from the States to my mailbox?

A: Express, First Class (Priority), SAM, PAL: Brought by plane from the states to Frankfurt. The GMAT (German Mail Air Terminal) in Frankfurt separates and loads trucks destined for all Regional Post Offices (RPO) in Germany. The mail truck arrives around 8 a.m. at our RPO/APO each day of the week, Mon-Fri. The APO then breaks down the mail for the community. We (the CMR) then pick up the mail from the APO. We then sort, process, and pitch the mail into the mailboxes. Transit time is between 5-14 days. Express is 2-3 days.

Pre-Sorted standard catalogs and PO: May travel by the same means as Express, First Class (Priority), SAM, and PAL or by the same means as the following:

Parcel post, 4th class, and standard, bulk: Travels over ground from point of origin in the states to New Jersey in semi containers. Once in NJ, it is loaded onto a boat that travels to Bremerhaven, Germany. The container is down loaded and delivered to the RPO/APO once a week, usually on Tuesdays. Transit time is between 4-6 weeks.

Q: Will extra postage be required for mail to be shipped to me or from me?

A: No, there is no difference from the states to here or from here to the states. Domestic rates apply regardless of states or from APO (example= if you mailed a letter home, it would cost only 41 cents, and if home mailed you a letter it would cost them also 41 cents).

Q: Do I have to put a stamp on an envelope that has the endorsement "No Postage Necessary if Mailed in the United States?"

A: No, postage is not required.

Q: How must I wrap my packages?

A: Normal cardboard boxes can be used with brown/clear packing tape. If the boxes being used previously contain merchandise, the box can be used provided that any markings on the outside have been marked out or the box is covered with brown wrapping paper. If the box contains the merchandise then the box only needs to be sealed with brown/clear packing tape. The APO has brown wrapping paper available in their lobby free of charge. For more information: <http://>

Contact your local CMR for more information and operating hours:

Ansbach: Katterbach Kaserne, DSN 467-2726. Shipton Kaserne, DSN 467-2467. Barton Barracks, DSN 468-7664, or Stork Barracks, DSN 467-4992.

Bamberg: DSN 469-7500. Monday-Friday 10 a.m.-1 p.m. and 3-6 p.m.

Grafenwoehr: DSN 475-6164, Open Monday-Friday 10 a.m.-5:30 p.m.

Garmisch: DSN 440-3545. Open Monday-Friday 2-6 p.m.

www.usps.com/send/preparemailandpackages/preparingpackages.htm.

Q: How big can incoming and outgoing packages be?

A: **Parcel Post:** Packages can weigh up to 70 lbs. and measure up to 130 inches in combined length and distance around the thickest part. Parcel post is deliverable to every U.S. address, including PO boxes and military addresses. Delivery time is around 4-6 weeks.

Priority Mail: Maximum weight is 70 pounds, and the maximum size is 108 inches in length and distance around the thickest part combined. Priority mail is deliverable to every address in the United States - including PO Boxes and military addresses. Delivery time is around 7-10 days.

Q: Can I send or receive over night express? If not, how long does it take express mail to transit?

A: No, over night express is not possible. Normal express takes 2-3 days to transit the system, not counting the day mailed. Express Mail Military Service is guaranteed for delivery in 2-3 days, not counting the day mailed. Postage is refundable if not received within the given times.

Q: Can I use other than the U.S. Postal System to receive parcels (i.e. UPS and Fed Ex)?

A: Yes, you can have items sent to your physical address, but at a much higher cost and it may be subject to import and customs taxes of the host country.

Q: Who can pick up my mail?

A: You and your command sponsored dependents. You can also fill out a PS form 3801 (Standing Delivery Orders) to have others pick up your mail so long as they are an ID card holder with the same privileges for mail.

Q: If I have friends or family that come to Germany for a visit, can they receive mail through my box?

A: No, only command sponsored dependents (family members listed on your orders) may receive mail through your mailbox.

Q: How often should I check my mail?

A: Daily if possible, but at a minimum weekly.

Q: What happens to my mail if I do not pick it up?

A: By regulation we are required to check mailboxes monthly for aged mail or non use. If we find old mail in a mailbox, we attempt to contact the sponsor of the box, if unable to do that we then attempt to contact the unit commanding officer or first sergeant to find out where the Soldier is.

We then act on what ever information we find out. If there is no reason for the mail being old, we then do one of two things:

1. We return the old mail back to the sender as "unclaimed".
2. We close the mailbox.

Q: What if I am unable to make it to the CMR during normal hours of operations?

A: You can appoint someone on a PS Form 3801 to pick up your mail, or you can request (at Vilseck CMR) the use of the After Hours Parcel Area (request forms located in lobby).

Q: What if I am unable to pick up mail (i.e. leave, TDY, deployed, etc...) for more than eight working days?

A: Come to the CMR before leaving and fill out a DD form 2258 (Temporary Mail Disposition Instructions). If you leave with short or no notice, and the window is closed, we have 2258s in the hallway. Fill one out and drop in the drop boxes by the customer service window or at the end of the hall.

Q: When I deploy, do I still get my mail?

A: Yes, the mailbox remains open and you need to fill out a DD Form 2258, if gone for more than eight working days. You can have your mail held or forwarded to you. We recommend that if you do not have dependents here to pick up mail for you while you are gone, that you have your mail forwarded to you.

Q: What type of identification do I need to pick up mail at the customer service window?

A: Your military ID card is all that is required and is the only ID accepted.

Q: Can I check my mail at anytime of the day or night?

A: Most lobbies are open 24-7, unless otherwise posted. See the box below for hours and contact information for your post.

Q: How will I know that mail has been distributed for the day?

A: There are two marques at each end of the CMR that we change daily, Monday-Friday, to show mail is distributed or has not been distributed for the day.

Q: When is daily mail distribution normally completed?

A: Monday and Tuesday times are around 5 p.m. The rest of the week is around 2:30 p.m. Times may vary based on the amount of mail and the time in which the mail truck arrives.

Q: Can I run a business through my CMR address?

A: No. Any business related mail can not come to your CMR address. You can have business items sent to your physical address; however it may be subject to customs and import taxes.

Q: Can products I order from the states be delivered to me at the CMR?

A: Yes, so long as the items are not on the prohibited list or business related.

Q: Are there any items that I can not receive through my CMR mailbox?

A: Yes. Coffee, cigars, and cigarettes to list a few of the items not allowed to be received through your receptacle.

Q: Can I mail TA50 to my personal mailbox?

A: No. TA50 can not be mailed to your or anyone's personal mailbox.

Q: What are the procedures if I have not received a package that should have arrived?

A: **Uninsured and Certified:** The sender can go to the local post office and fill out a PS Form 1510 (Mail loss/Riffling Report).

Insured, Express, and Registered: Only the sender may file a postal insurance claim, PS Form 1000. The sender needs to go to the local Post office and fill out the claim there.

For more information, go to the USPS Web site, click on receiving your mail and check out FAQ's, topic claims, sub-topic domestic mail.

Q: What are the procedures for packages received where some items that were supposed to be included are missing?

A: **Uninsured and Certified:** The sender or addressee can go to the local Post Office and fill out a PS Form 1510 (Mail loss/Riffling Report)

Insured, Express, and Registered: The sender or addressee may file a postal insurance claim. The sender or addressee needs to go to the local Post office and fill out a PS Form 1000.

For more information, go to the USPS Web site, click on receiving your mail and check out FAQ's, topic claims, sub-topic domestic mail.

Q: What are the procedures for packages received with items that are broken?

A: **Uninsured and Certified:** If the parcel we receive has damaged or broken contents, there is nothing that can be done.

Insured, Express, and Registered: The sender or addressee may file a postal insurance claim. The sender or addressee needs to go to the local Post office and fill out a PS Form 1000.

For more information, go to the USPS Web site, click on receiving your mail and check out FAQ's, topic claims, sub-topic domestic mail.

Hohenfels: DSN 466-2796, open Monday-Friday 10 a.m.-6 p.m.

Schweinfurt: Conn Barracks, Monday-Wednesday and Friday 9 a.m.-1 p.m., 3-5:30 p.m., Thursday 10 a.m.-1 p.m., 3-5:30 p.m. Ledward Barracks, Monday-Wednesday and Friday 9 a.m.-1 p.m., 3-5:30 p.m.

Vilseck: DSN 476-2509, Open Monday-Friday 10 a.m.-5:30 p.m.

Wuerzburg: Leighton Barracks, Monday-Wednesday and Friday 9 a.m.-1 p.m., 3-5:30 p.m., Thursday 10 a.m.-1 p.m., 3-5:30 p.m.

Travel Tips

Explore your community for rich rewards

by RONALD H. TOLAND JR.
and CORA BLÜMM
Bavarian News

If this is your first time in Europe, you will soon find out life here is a little different than back home.

The most obvious difference is the language barrier, but not far behind are the culture, eating, driving habits, landscape, space conservation, and extreme temperature differences.

Most Americans are used to a bigger size of things like houses, large yards, appliances, and the like—and even the parking spaces are smaller here.

But don't feel boxed in with the differences—engage and appreciate them as part of your European experience. It could be the adventure of a lifetime!

You will come to quickly realize that a late night trip down to the local convenient or grocery store to pick up a few things is not possible—most local stores close at 8 p.m. sharp.

And post shoppettes and commissaries have their own operating hours, so be sure to check those times as well.

Stock up on staple items, emergency essentials, and any special items you and your family may need.

Be prepared by being armed with the schedules of your local stores. This will help you in times of need or emergencies and help you get the most out of your time here.

And do not be afraid to shop and try the local stores and items here. They are people, too, and eat and drink most of the same things we do—just not always prepared the way you are used to.

While out shopping in Germany or Europe in general, you may find that your dollar may not stretch as far as you're used to. But there are plenty of bargain stores, Saturday morning flea markets, grocery stores, and low-cost shops at the weekly open-air markets in local town centers that would love your business.

Finding them is not difficult and it will help you get out and experience things on the

You do not know a country until you know some of its people, and living off post offers a wonderful opportunity to see and experience life here.

economy.

Trying new experiences is something we are all challenged with at one time or another. Sure, there are anxieties with language and culture barriers, but getting out and experiencing life in Germany and your new environment—making German friends and integrating into the society—helps you overcome any fears you may have.

One great way to integrate with the locals initially is to visit local guesthouses, restaurants, and pubs—not the highly visible and well-known fast food eateries we are all used to and know back home.

For a delicious taste of Germany, order a glass of locally produced wine or beer to go along with whatever is typically on the menu for that regional area. Don't be afraid to try something new. Your taste buds will be glad you did.

Volksmarches

Another way to assimilate is to get involved with the Volksmarches that typically begin in the early spring.

These leisure marches typically happen over the course of a few hours in the morning, and usually begin and end at a local pub or restaurant where you can enjoy a good meal and beverage afterwards.

Some people even make a fitness event out of them and run, jog, or bike on the path. Ordinarily, there are prize awards like collectible German beer mugs for various categories of finishers: first place, best time, or groups, for example.

So, sign up for a Saturday Volksmarch—you will find many people that participate on a regular basis and some are even members of local Volksmarching associations or clubs that welcome Americans.

You will find most locals are interested in American culture and will want to help you break through the language barrier by trying to teach you some German while practicing their English on you, too.

Learning even just some German will help you immensely during your time here—most Germans love it when you at least try.

If you live on the economy, get to know and talk to your next-door neighbors as they can help you and you can learn a lot by interacting with them.

For the most part, you will find that the locals want to practice their English. Learn key German words, speak slowly, and use small phrases.

If you ask a non-English-speaking person something, and apply those key words, your efforts and time will not only be much appreciated, but will go a long way with your communication efforts.

Granted, you may struggle to get in a few German phrases here and there in a conversation, but keep practicing and you'll do just fine. However, don't always just fall back into using English only just because they want to practice their English on you.

Volksfests

Other ways to get involved are to attend Volksfests. These events are popular with Americans and Germans alike and, depending on the size of the town, can be week-long events or even longer.

Fests typically celebrate a historical date or event and bring the people in the community together. Fests include a variety of rides for young and old, and classic German food and drink, including locally produced wine and beer.

Your local Army Community Services has

a variety of information about these events along with many other ideas for making the most of your assignment here.

So, get out, make friends, learn from them, ask questions, and at least try to learn some of the language and the culture—what the Germans call "Gemütlichkeit."

Here's a housing tip: German housing window shades are called "Rolladen." The benefits of these devices are twofold: used to protect precious late night and early morning privacy and as a safety measure. Rolling them down at night will give you privacy that will come to feel like a lifelong habit that you may miss when you relocate.

Making Friends

Making local friends in your off-post neighborhood is definitely a plus. You do not know a country until you know some of its people, and living off post offers a wonderful opportunity to see and experience life here.

And even if you live in military housing, walking your dog, shopping off post, frequenting a favorite restaurant—maybe even occasionally taking your well-behaved pooch along to dinner with you at an outdoor restaurant—will get you involved.

Don't forget to be a good ambassador during your stay. While most Germans readily welcome Americans into their communities, sometimes Americans get a reputation overseas for being loud, intolerant of others' views, and unable to appreciate any cuisine other than burgers. Prove them wrong.

Keep in mind the world security situation as well as your unofficial ambassadorial role and leave your military unit T-shirts and American-branded gear at home when you venture off post.

Combat gear like camouflage pants are certainly high fashion at the moment, but sticking with your favorite jeans and non-culturally specific T-shirts help you blend in.

There may not be any place like home, but if you put forth the effort and get out and about, chances are your European experience will claim a big chunk of your heart before it's over.

Plan fun, safe trips by following travel guidance

by Maj. J. SCOTT GILLESPIE
DPTMS Plans and Operations

Army in Europe Travel Guidance has published recent changes for travel to countries outside Germany and pertains to all U.S. military personnel, DoD civilian personnel, non-DoD personnel traveling under DOD sponsorship (e.g., contractors). The guidance also pertains to family members.

DOD personnel who live in Germany and travel through or visit locations outside of U.S. controlled areas are more vulnerable to terrorist attacks, or other acts of violence.

It is essential that personnel maintain heightened situational awareness, a realistic plan to reduce their vulnerabilities, and connectivity with U.S. authorities responsible for their security.

Commanders

Commanders must maintain visibility over their military, civilian employees, and family members traveling in both official and unofficial status.

Commanders will ensure a means exists to notify travelers of any changes in the threat situation or security environment.

Below are general antiterrorism requirements for travel:

Commanders and supervisors who are the reviewing or approving authority for leave or pass requests will obtain current information when travel is to a country where the threat level is considered "significant" or a Department of State travel warning is in effect.

Current country information can be obtained

through the following:

- Department of State (DOS) Web site at www.travel.state.gov
- Centers for Disease Control
- DOD Regulation 4500.45-G
- Foreign Clearance Guide (FCG)
- AE Regulation 525-13.

Personnel traveling outside of their country of assignment must be briefed prior to departure on the country-specific threats they may encounter, vulnerabilities associated with the travel, and security measures to reduce their risk.

This requirement is for any country where the terrorist threat level is considered significant or high, or where travel restrictions have been imposed.

Register your trip

Military personnel, civilian employees, and family members traveling unofficially are encouraged to register their trip with the U.S. Embassy or consulate nearest their destination through the Department of State (DOS) Web site at <http://travelregistration.state.gov/ibrs/>.

Army in Europe sponsored conferences, large gatherings, or special events outside of country of assignment also require approval by the commanding general, 7th JMTC. Requests must be submitted to the DPTMS Force Protection Office no less than 30 days prior to event.

For more information, contact Conrad Cablay, Antiterrorism/Force Protection Office, at DSN 475-8825.

Useful Web sites:

- www.fcg.pentagon.mil (Provides

information on country specific travel documents, prohibitions on wear of uniform, use of transportation, currency exchange, and country specific clearance requirements.)

- www.cdc.gov/travel/ (Provides health

related information for various countries)

- http://jramp.eucom.smil.mil/jramp/app_uploads/aer525-13%nov05.pdf (FOUO document can be viewed via classified means at this address for those with SIPR access).

Top 10 travel tips

Contact numbers

Also, keep a wallet size list of important contact numbers and understand any antiterrorism measures in place for the trip.

6. Do not leave your luggage unattended in public areas.

Do not accept packages from strangers.

7. Prior to your departure, you should register with the nearest U.S. embassy or consulate through the State Department's travel registration Web site: <https://travelregistration.state.gov/ibrs/>.

Registration

Registration will make your presence and whereabouts known in case it is necessary to contact you in an emergency.

8. To avoid being the target of a crime, do not wear conspicuous clothing or expensive jewelry.

Do not carry excessive amounts of money or unneeded credit cards.

9. To avoid violating local laws, only deal with authorized agents when you exchange money or purchase art or antiques.

10. If you get into trouble, contact the nearest U.S. embassy.

Be aware of road rules concerning cell phone usage to avoid big fines

by ROBERT SZOSTEK
USAREUR Office of the Provost Marshal

Hand-held phones are safety hazards that have caused many road accidents in Europe.

For that reason, the Department of Defense and most European nations have banned the use of hand-held cell phones while driving a motor vehicle.

"These laws are enforced on and off U.S. installations throughout Europe," said Lt. Col. Deborah Anderson, former chief of law enforcement operations at the United States Army, Europe, office of the provost marshal.

"Studies show that mobile phone use in cars is unsafe," said Anderson. "Driving safely is a complex task and requires total concentration. Phoning distracts drivers and any distraction can make you miss hearing or seeing the cues needed to avoid a crash."

Anderson said it is best to switch off the phone as soon as entering the car, but added that people who want to communicate while driving can:

- Buy a "hands free" device that allows the driver to keep both hands on the steering wheel. The device can also be distracting, so short duration calls are recommended.

■ Use the voice mailbox function and call people back when finished driving.

"It is okay if people use a hand-held phone in a vehicle if it is safely parked and the engine is off," Anderson said. "However, penalties for having a cell phone in your hand or wedged between your head and shoulder while driving, even in slow moving traffic, are severe."

Here's a partial list of fines:

Belgium - fines from €50 to €1,375.

Germany - a €40 fine and one point against your license.

Italy - fines from €68 to €275.

Luxembourg - fines up to €74.

Netherlands - minimum fine is €140, max is two months in prison or a €2,000 fine.

Department of Defense - DOD policy is to assess three points against your license for on-post violations.

"People will suffer heavier penalties and can even lose their license if they caused an accident or were involved in one while using a cell phone improperly," Anderson added.

Visit your local safety office or online at www.per.hqusareur.army.mil/services/safetydivision/main.htm.

Smart Travel Tips

Overseas assignments provide opportunities for exploration

by RABIA NOMBAMBA

Bavarian News

An assignment to Germany opens up the opportunity to explore an entire continent.

Europe, the world's second smallest continent in terms of area, but the third most populated with 48 different countries, eight mountain ranges, bounded by the Arctic Ocean, Atlantic Ocean, and the Black Sea, offers cultural diversity and many different landscapes.

Sights from ancient times to the modern world can be found all over the continent. Ancient Rome's Coliseum, the Leaning Tower of Pisa, Westminster Abbey, Big Ben, Notre Dame, the Eiffel Tower, the Berlin Wall, Neuschwanstein, and battlefields from World War I and II are some of thousands of sights easily accessible from Bavaria.

And shopping opportunities like pottery shopping in Poland, crystal shopping in Czech, porcelain shopping in Italy, and antique shopping in Belgium can also be a part of your European adventure.

Army Community Services centers are a good place to start planning your European adventure.

"We try to provide information that can be done in the local area as well as in different European countries—get people to come by, get information and get ideas," said Dagmar Nall, information and referral specialist at the USAG Ansbach ACS.

Ansbach ACS is updating its travel section to better meet the needs of customers.

"I try to get information about the countries, specific places and certain areas where people have given us feedback," Nall said. "Soldiers and family members come here to get information about different travel destinations, sights, hotels, and more often come back to us with feedback on those places. I just got some feedback from a Normandy trip and I include that in our information folders."

And if the ACS staff does not have what you are looking for, they will research it for you, added Diana O'Brien, relocation manager at the Ansbach ACS.

Web sites like Travel Europe (<http://www.travelswise.com/>) or <http://goeurope.about.com/> are also a good source for travel destinations. Official city and town Web sites provide information on local sights, tours and hotel accommodations.

Local SATO travel agencies also have specialists to assist people with planning and making reservations—and they have access to government rates.

Due to its size, many travel destinations in Europe are easily accessible by car. The use of Germany's highway system—Autobahn—is free, but many other European countries require a pass to use their highways. Signs close to these countries' borders indicate the need to purchase a pass prior to leaving the country.

Route planners like <http://www.mapquest.com> are good tools for driving directions. Another option is picking up a



Photo by Jodi Ward

Big Ben, arguably one of the most famous sites in London, is what makes the London skyline distinct.

country map offered in stores and gas stations on the economy.

But ACS can help there, too.

"I get a lot of requests to print maps and we do that," Nall said.

A train trip might be a more relaxed way of traveling. The German Bundesbahn has a railroad monopoly in Germany, but other European countries have more than one railroad company with each covering a certain part of the country. For a train schedule or tickets in Germany, go to <http://www.db.de/site/bahn/en/start.html>.

For train tickets to different countries the internet service is often not able to give out price information. The information and tickets are available at all train stations' service counters.

Bundesbahn offers various special fares and trips. A Tageskarte is a one-day special, and when traveling inside of Bavaria a Bayernkarte is available for groups of either up to two adults and up to three children or even up to five adults is available. Other railroad specials can be found at the Bundesbahn Web page.

For those who enjoy group trips, bus tours might be the way to go. Different agencies like Enjoy Tours (<http://www.enjoytours.com>) or SATO offer bus trips to popular travel destinations in Europe. Local outdoor recreation centers also offer bus trips throughout the year.

In the last few years, Europe experienced a boom in bargain airlines. These airlines usually fly from and to smaller airports located further away from main cities. Often additional fees are charged for luggage, drinks and snacks. Check out the sidebar for an overview on bargain airlines and regular airlines with competing offers.

No matter if you're traveling by car, bus, train, or plane, hotel accommodations should

be reserved in advance. When traveling to popular tourism areas and during popular seasons, accommodations might be hard to find or might only be available at high prices.

The different standards in Europe's hotel ratings don't make it easy to pick out the desired accommodations. A five-star hotel in Germany doesn't necessarily offer the same comfort as one does in Turkey.

Pensions—family-owned guest houses—are often a cheaper alternative to hotels. However, in Spain or Italy, pensions are usually cheap hostels where as in Germany, Switzerland, or Austria, they are often cozy houses decorated in local traditional style that offer the region's specialties for breakfast and dinner.

In Germany and some of its neighboring countries, the so-called Gasthauses are often all that is available for overnight accommodations in smaller towns. Usually family-owned, they offer hotel rooms, bars, restaurants, and banquet facilities. Lunch and dinner are often served to the public whereas breakfast is typically reserved for overnight guests.

Wherever you go in Europe, you'll often find that even in the same country different regions have different food and customs. Europe has nude beaches and most saunas request their customers to be undressed.

At grocery stores in Germany, you have to buy plastic bags to take the goods home in. And when you shop for jewelry or carpets in Turkey, the proprietor will offer you Turkish tea or coffee and it is considered rude not to accept it. The French breakfast differently than the Italians, Germans, or British do—and none of them come close to an American-style one.

So, wherever you go, be prepared to experience and try something new. You might be surprised and get hooked on some of the European ways.

Listed below are bargain airlines or airlines with competing offers flying from Germany:

→ **AER Lingus:**

www.aerlingus.com

→ **Air Berlin:**

www.airberlin.com

→ **Air Baltic:**

www.airbaltic.com

→ **Air France:**

www.airfrance.de

→ **Air One:** www.flyairone.it

→ **Austrian air:**

www.aua.com

→ **Blu-Express:** www.blu-express.com

→ **Blue1:** www.blue1.fi/en

→ **Centralwings:** <http://www7.centralwings.com/index.en.shtml>

→ **Corendon:**

www.corendon.com

→ **Easyjet:** www.easyjet.de

→ **FlyBe:** www.flybe.com

→ **Germanwings:**

www.germanwings.com

→ **Iceland Express:** www.icelandexpress.de

→ **Intersky:**

www.intersky.biz

→ **Jet2:** www.jet2.com

→ **KLM:** www.klm.com

→ **FlyLAL:** www.lal.lt/en

→ **LTU:** www.ltu.de

→ **Lufthansa:**

www.lufthansa.com

→ **Meridiana:**

www.meridiana.it

→ **Norwegian Air Shuttle:** www.norwegian.no

→ **Ryanair:**

www.ryanair.com

→ **SAS:** www.flysas.com/en

→ **Spanair:**

www.spanair.com

→ **Sterling:** www.sterling.dk

→ **Sun Express:**

www.sunexpress.de

→ **TUIfly:** www.tuifly.com

→ **Virgin Express:**

www.brusselsairlines.com

→ **Wizz:** www.wizzair.com



Photo by Lou Stagger

The Leaning Tower of Pisa is a site often visited by tourists as they travel throughout Italy.

Ansbach

Dinkelsbühl

St. George Minister, a wide-aisled Gothic church with its richly-decorated side-altars, the Rothenburg Gate with its torture chamber and prison cells, or the Almshouses—a church with an enclosed three-wing building and inner court yard—are some of the sights that draw visitors to Dinkelsbühl.

Each summer, the city celebrates the Kinderzeche—the city's re-enactment that recalls the story of Kinderlore, whose background dates back to 1632 during the 30-Years-War.

For more information on sights and accommodations in Dinkelsbühl, e-mail touristik.service@dinkelsbuehl.de.

Photo courtesy of the City of Dinkelsbuehl



Rothenburg

With its massive fortifications, towers, churches, museums and patrician houses with ornate facades, the city maintains much of its medieval appearance.

The toy and doll museum are also major draws. Over 800 French and German dolls from the past 200 years can be found at the Rothenburg Toy and Doll Museum.

Each night from March until Christmas, Rothenburg's "last night watchman" offers a guided tour in English through the medieval city. In medieval times, the night watchmen were responsible for security inside the city gates as well as keeping the street lights lit.

Rothenburg is also a Christmas town. Each year its Reitersmarkt—Christmas market—is set up between the town hall and St. Jacob's church.

For more information on sights and events in Rothenburg, go to www.rothenburg.de.

Photo courtesy of the City of Rothenburg

Franconian Lake District

With its Altmühlsee, the Brombachsee and the Rothsee, the Lake District offers several beaches along with paddle boats, sailboats, and surfboards. Boat trips and canoe trips around the lakes are also offered.

The region is also covered by a wide range of cycling and walking routes to suit every taste.

Around Gunzenhausen and the Altmühlsee alone, more than 300 km of marked cycling and trekking trails make it easy to explore the area. A variety of bicycles are available at reasonable rental rates.

Photo by Bilyana Atova

Bamberg

Regnitz River

There is much to see in Bamberg—the city is renowned for its architecture, artworks, cafes, gardens, parks, antique shops and ferry boats along the Regnitz River that are a part of Bamberg's grand past.

Photo by Nicole Karsch-Meibom

Alt Rathaus

Some of the city's dignity lies in the famous old town hall, a well-known tourist attraction. It was built in the middle of the river Regnitz with murals dominating its facade.

The old town hall is said to represent the two ruling forces—the church and the economic communities. From a connecting bridge, viewers can admire a similarity to Venice. Locals refer to this part of the city as Fisherman's Village or "Little Venice."

Photo by Nicole Karsch-Meibom

The Dome

Bamberg's residents have always been strongly linked to religion.

The many cathedrals and churches are proof of a strong devotion. The cathedral contains many notable statues, the tombs of Henry II, his wife Kunigunde, Pope Clement II, and a wooden altar carved by Veit Stoss.

The statue of a mysterious knight on his horse lures many onlookers into the cathedral. The identity of the rider as well as that of the artist is unknown.

Other historic buildings in Bamberg include the former Benedictine Abbey and Saint Michael's Church, constructed in 1015.

Legend has it that a fire broke out in a local brewery while the monks were brewing a batch of beer and it gave the drying hops a smoky flavor. The monks used them in their beer and many people liked the taste of it. Since then, they've continued the process.

Photo by Nicole Karsch-Meibom



At 9,718 feet with a popular cog-train to the summit, the Zugspitze in Garmisch is the highest peak in Germany. The Garmisch community is located at the base of the Alps and is home to Edelweiss, an Armed Forces Recreation Center lodge and resort. The Alps give the area a picturesque backdrop while providing nearly unending winter sport opportunities such as skiing and snowboarding. Each installation in Bavaria has many interesting features that are well worth exploring. Even when just arriving, you don't have to travel far to delve into the European culture that surrounds us. See each community's feature for a little bit more about what the town has to offer.

Schweinfurt



Photo by Böck, the City of Hammelburg

Hammelburg

www.hammelburg.de

Hammelburg was first documented in 716 as "Hamulo castellum." In the twelfth century, Fulda built the Fortress "Saaleck" on the hill across for the protection of Hammelburg and to control the "Trimbach" which was built by the counts of Henneberg.

After belonging to Austria for a short time, the city finally became part of Bavaria in 1816. The city, the oldest documented Franconian wine town, has many attractions.

Many well-preserved monuments, cozy restaurants, guesthouses, and hotels, a sport center with indoor and outdoor pools, outdoor and indoor tennis courts, soccer and track and field stadium, and a landing strip for motor airplanes and gliders.

Photo courtesy of Flavio Burul

Bad Kissingen

www.badkissingen.de

The city with more than 1,200 years of eventful history and was first documented as "chizziche" in 801 and salt water was discovered in 823. Besides being a historical town and a famous spa, Bad Kissingen offers many sights, such as the Regentenbau, located in the Rose Garden, the Bismarck Museum, and Jakobus Church.

Photo courtesy of Flavio Burul

Wuerzburg

www.wuerzburg.de

First mentioned as *Vurteburg* in 704, Wuerzburg's history dates possibly back to 1,000 B.C., at the site of the Marienberg fortress.

The first church at the site of the cathedral was built as early as 788, and consecrated that same year by Charlemagne; the current building was constructed from 1040 to 1225 in Romanesque style. In 1720, the foundations were laid for the Wuerzburg Residence, one of the city's modern-day tourist attractions.

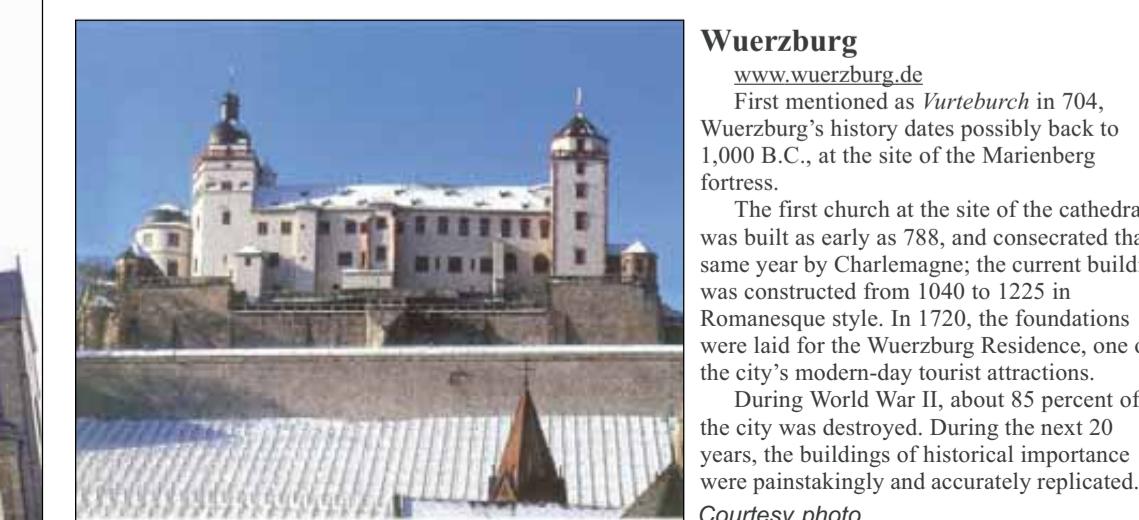
During World War II, about 85 percent of the city was destroyed. During the next 20 years, the buildings of historical importance were painstakingly and accurately replicated.

St. Agidius

The St. Agidius Church in Vilseck was started in the 11th century, and completed in the 1400's. More work was done in 1751 to rebuild the west gable in Gothic and Baroque styles. The intricate stone work and masonry of the exterior are simplistic by comparison to the ornate carvings, paintings and statuary within the church.

In sheer historical value, this is a local landmark to experience. The church derives its name from the day the ground stone was laid, Sept. 1, 1407. The church is always open to the public. They appreciate the Americans who come to look and absorb the beauty of the church as well as those who attend services. The church offers an English translation of its history and artifacts in pamphlet and booklet format.

Photo by Paula Guzman



Courtesy photo

Grafenwoehr

Kahrmuele

Discover German cuisine, culture, and hospitality at Kahrmuele, in Pressath.

It is a typical German guesthouse, romantic but also kid-friendly, with a delicious cuisine and nice decoration, where the owner himself serves you.

The first mention of Kahrmuehlen was in 1420 in the Weihsberg Castle record books. It was originally built as an ironworks.

When the weather's nice, one can also enjoy the beer garden just next to the water. A swimming area with a sand beach is located nearby just 300 meters away.

Photo by Bilyana Atova

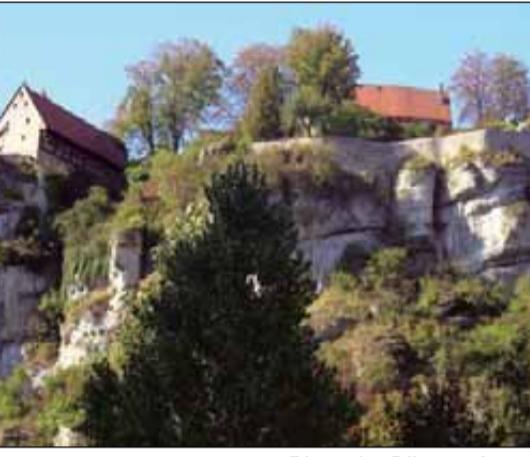


Photo by Bilyana Atova

Franconian Switzerland

Franconian Switzerland is one of the oldest and most popular holiday areas in Germany.

There is much to discover, from castles and hundreds of years-old tiny villages to interesting caves and landscape that is breathtaking. The area offers more than 150 castles and palaces and more than 1,000 caves of every size up to the huge "Devil's cave".

Franconian Switzerland is also the region with the highest brewery density in the world. With the several hundred breweries throughout the area, nearly every small village has one of its own.

The area is the biggest producer of sweet cherries in the EU, which can often be purchased from a local farmer.



Photo by Bilyana Atova

Eschenbach

The cozy town of Eschenbach is located literally just down the street from Grafenwoehr. It is especially nice to visit during the summer because its lake is an authorized swimming area.

Grab your picnic basket and a blanket and enjoy a day of relaxation on the lake, rent a paddle boat for a nice ride, or have a glass of beer or ice-cream at the little cafeteria there.

This historic old town, with its baroque church and small, welcoming restaurants, also hosts a Nutcracker factory that has a very wide variety of seasonal and Christmas decoration as well as nutcrackers.

On the way out of town, do not forget to stop by the family-owned Heindl bakery, founded in 1865. Even Elvis himself, when he was stationed here, would visit the bakery because of its delicious sandwiches.

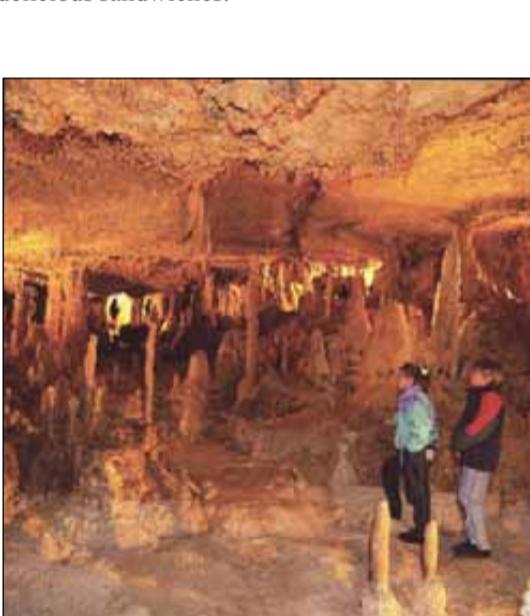


Photo courtesy of the City of Velburg

Hohenfels

King Otto's Caves

The limestone caves named for King Otto, Koenig-Otto-Tropfsteinhoehle, located in Velburg, are an interesting and fun thing to do on a warm summer day. Located about 15 minutes from Hohenfels, these caves provide an amazing

look at what can take place over thousands of years. Stalagmites, stalactites, special rock formations, and underground ponds are just a few of the sites you will enjoy during your visit.

Regardless of the outside temperature, it can be very chilly inside the cave, so you will want to take a medium heavy coat with you. Tours lasting less than an hour leave on a regular schedule. There is a nice restaurant on site to enjoy a snack or drink after your tour. Just follow the Tropfsteinhoehle signs.



Photo courtesy of the City of Nuremberg

Nuremberg's Christmas Market With a history dating back to 1573, this Christmas festival features about 180 stalls and vendors offering Nuremberg spicy gingerbread, typical Christmas articles such as Christmas tree angels, cribs, Christmas tree ornaments and candles, toys, and arts and crafts products.

Try the Nuremberg bratwurst and Gluehwein. It will soon become a favorite Christmas tradition of your family.

Photo courtesy of the City of Nuremberg

Monte Kaolino

Monte Kaolino, located in the quaint town of Hirschau near Amberg, features the world's only sand ski mountain that allows visitors to surf on the sand in a manner that will remind many of a ski resort in the Alps.

Several of the open air pools are surrounded by fine white sand. There is also camping available.



Photo courtesy of Monte Kaolino

Delve into German culture with year-round festivals

Ansbach

Feb. 5: Fasching Parade in Herrieden
 April 25-May 1: Frühlingsfest Ansbach
 April 26-May 4: Spring Hiking weeks in Rothenburg
 May 9-12: Historical Festival – re-enactment “The Master Draft”, in Rothenburg
 May 21-25: Altstadtfest Ansbach
 June 7-8: Altstadtfest in Feuchtwangen
 July 4-6: Rocco Festspiele in Ansbach
 July 10-16: Kirchweih & Schützenfest in Ansbach
 July 13: Folklore procession in Ansbach
 July 18-27: Kinderzeche –re-enactment- in Dinkelsbühl
 July 19-20: Altstadtfest in Herrieden
 July 25-Aug. 3: Kaspar-Hauser Festspiele, Ansbach
 Aug. 8-10: Tauberfestival (Rock music Festival) at Taubertal
 Nov. 28-Dec. 23: Christmas market in Dinkelsbühl
 Nov. 28-Dec. 23: Reitelsmark (Christmas market) in Rothenburg
 Nov. 29-Dec. 23: Christmas market in Ansbach

Hohenfels

Straubing: Aug. 8 – 18: Fest of the Summer Harvest in Straubing
 July 26 – Aug. 4: the Anna Fest in honor of St. Anne in Forchheim
 Sept. 1-10: Abensberg Carnival
 Jan. 31: Chinesefasching in Dietfurt

Schweinfurt

Feb. 5: Fasching Parade on Shrove Tuesday, March 14-16: Auto/Freizeit/Sport (car/leisure/sport) fair (Volksfestplatz)
 March: Vogelschuss (carnival)
 May 23-June 2: Volksfest (carnival)
 July 5: Honky Tonk Festival
 July 5: Fleamarket (Volksfestplatz)
 July 24-25: Bauerngassen Fest
 July: Winefest (market square)
 Sept. 19-20: Streetfest
 Sept. 17-Oct. 5: UFRA - trade fair (Volksfestplatz)
 Nov. 27-Dec. 22: Christmas Market

Wuerzburg

Jan. 21-27: International Film Weekend
 April 20-26: Wuerzburg Residenz Run
 May 4, 2008-May 3, 2009: International Children Fest
 May 24-Aug. 6 and May 16-31: Cultural Day in the Winery Juliuspital
 April 27, 2007-May 10, 2009: Wuerzburg city marathon
 May 23-24: Baroque Fest
 May 22-25: Africa Festival
 May 30-Aug. 6: Wuerzburg Wine Village
 May 30-June 29: Mozart Fest
 June 23-27: Buergerspital wine yard shopping fest
 June 20-22: free outdoor festival



Photo by Bilyana Atova

There are many fests available to allow newcomers to have fun with their German neighbors. Military installations have annual German-American volksfests (above), bringing together the local festival atmosphere with traditional American fairs.

June 30-July 4: garden wine fest
 July 9-21: yard fest by the stone
 July 11-12: Italian night
 Aug. 1-2: wine party in Buergerspital yard/Pfaffenbergs
 Aug. 8-10: Ring Park Fest
 Aug.-Sept.: wine parade by the cathedral (Dom)
 Sept. 14-15, Sept. 19-20: city fest
 Oct. 1-Dec. 15, Oct. 1-Nov. 30: literary autumn
 Oct. 4: Wuerzburg Residenz night
 Oct. 25-26: Wuerzburg Jazz festival
 Nov. 22-Dec. 2: Wuerzburg Days for Bach
 Nov. 28-Dec. 23: Wuerzburg Christmas market
 Aug. 12-Nov. 15: special exhibit in Mainfraenkischen museum: The World on the Move

Grafenwoehr and Vilseck

Jan. 6: Night of the 1,000 Lights at Pottenstein
 Jan. 12: Fasching Party at Sorghof

Wolfgangsheim (behind church)
 Jan. 18: Fasching Party by Sorghof Sports Club at Sorghof Wolfgangshain
 Jan. 19: Fasching Party by Vilseck Loewen Club at Ratz Fatz Halle Vilseck
 Jan. 25: Ladies Fasching Party (Weiberfasching) at Sorghof Wolfgangshain
 Jan. 25: Ski-Haserl Fasching Party by the Ski Club Unterweissenbach at the Vilseck Castle Dagestein
 Feb. 2: Fasching Party by the Vilseck Soccer Club at the Vilseck Castle Dagestein
 Feb. 3: Fasching Parade at Vilseck town center
 Feb. 3: Fasching Parade at Hahnbach town center
 Feb. 3: Fasching Parade at Schnaittenbach town center
 Feb. 5: Fasching Parade at Freudenberg town center
 March 22-April 6: Nuremberg Frühlingsfest (Volksfest)
 April 25-May 4: Weidener Frühlingsfest (Volksfest)
 April 25-May 4: Frühlingsvolksfest Sulzbach-Rosenberg
 May 9-18: Amberg Pfingstdult (Volksfest)

May 8-19: Bergkirchweih Erlangen
 May 9-19: Bayreuth Volksfest
 May 16-18: German-American Volksfest Vilseck
 June 6-8: Rock im Park Nuremberg
 June 13-16: 125th Anniversary of Sorghof Fire Department
 June 21-22: Amberg Altstadtfest
 June 27-29: Altstadtfest Sulzbach-Rosenberg
 June 28-July 6: Amberg Bergfest
 July 19-27: Sulzbach-Rosenberg Annabergfest
 July 26-28: Kirwa at Sorghof
 Aug. 2-3: Vilseck Brunnenfest
 Aug. 9-17: Hahnbach Bergfest
 Aug. 23-25: Kirwa at Schlicht
 Sept. 13-14: Medieval Knights Camp at Castle Dagestein in Vilseck
 Sept. 18-29: Nuremberg Altstadtfest
 Sept. 20-Oct. 5: Munich Oktoberfest 2008
 Oct. 25-27: Kirwa at Castle Dagestein in Vilseck

Dates and locations are subject to change. Check with the Rathaus, or town hall, in the town where the fest is held for more information.

Fasching a time for revelry, costumes before Lent

Special to the Bavarian News

Some consider Germany to have five seasons, the fifth being Fasching (also known as carnival). Local communities celebrate this time with many fun activities.

Countless parties, carnival balls/parties (Faschingsbälle) and carnival parades (Faschingsumzüge) take place. The participants from several clubs and carnival teams ride through the cities on colorful decorated carnival vehicles.

Visitors in costumes just as colorful and visionary as the wagons, collect provided candies until all pockets and bags are filled.

Fasching is one of the oldest traditions celebrated, not only in Germany, but in many countries throughout the world.

The carnival period begins every year on the 11th day of November at 11 minutes after

11 and is celebrated continuously with parties, festive dinners, dancers, and masquerade balls until Ash Wednesday.

It combines a number of old fertility rites and customs, which began even before Christianization like the driving out of the winter, fear of coldness and sickness.

Also humans always tended to use the last days before a period of fasting to enjoy life once more to the fullest.

In Catholic Bavaria people call it Fasching. The word “Fasching” is assumed to be a derivation of the Middle High German Fastschank, the last drink served before the Fast (Lent).

Historically, during Fasching the lower classes were allowed to wear costumes and masks and to mimic aristocracy and heads of the church and state without fear of retribution for mockery.

The tidal waves of carnival revelry are particularly strong in the Rhineland, since that is where it had its beginning.

Big pageants with costumed marchers and masked dancers and floats are especially colorful in the cities of Cologne, Duesseldorf, and Mainz, where it is almost a civic duty to join the fun on Shrove Tuesday.

Throughout the centuries the carnival grew bigger and better, and by Feb. 10, 1823, when Prince Carnival was crowned in the city square of Neumarkt in Cologne, it had developed into a massive celebration with great parades and city-wide revelry in many countries throughout the world.

In many cities a Prince Carnival, referred to as “His Crazy Highness” is elected to head with his princess a court of fools and lead the frolics.

On Faschingsdienstag (Fasching Tuesday)

the crazy couple will move with their retinue into the “Rathaus” (City Hall) to govern until midnight when the merrymaking and foolishness comes to a sudden halt.

Due to the fact that it is a tradition that on the Thursday before Ash Wednesday the women symbolically take over the lead (etc. town halls) and therefore are allowed to cut the men’s ties, we suggest to take it good-humoredly and not to wear your most expensive tie.

Traditions vary, but two things are always present: Noise and costumes.

Carnival is celebrated everywhere. Everybody is in a good mood, a lot of fun, paper streamers, garlands, confetti, and of course a lot of beer. Fasching is the time, when people don’t take things so seriously, and people are having a lot of fun. In other words it’s party time!

Helpful Hints

Prep for shopping on German economy by learning customs, measurements

by BILYANA ATOVA
Bavarian News

Looking for an adventure? Shopping for groceries in Germany could be one of your favorite experiences while living abroad, all you need is a pinch of preparation.

And it also may take a pinch of getting used to. For me, the most difficult thing was to get used to the hours of operation at the local supermarket.

Keep in mind that most grocery stores close at 8 p.m. and they are not open on Sunday.

So, if you are planning on making pancakes for breakfast on Sunday morning, make sure you have extra milk because you will not be able to run to the store.

Another difference is that shopping carts require a deposit. The deposit is normally one euro, which is inserted into the lock on the handle that will unlock the chain keeping the cart attached to the other carts.

That makes everyone bring back their cart to the rack to get their coin back.

But the biggest distinction of all is the metric system that is different than the measuring units used in the U.S. and could be challenging for newcomers. Germany, as well as the rest of the world with the exception of the three countries Liberia, Myanmar, and the United States, uses the International System of Units.

This is a decimal system of weights and measures in which a gram is the unit of weight, a meter the unit of length, and a liter is the unit of volume.

These units are conveniently related: one liter of water weighs 1,000 grams and one cubic meter contains 1,000 liters; 1,000 grams is the same as one kilogram and 1,000 milliliters equal one liter. It is a real easy system to use and it makes a perfect sense, so it should not take much time to get used to it.

There are mathematical formulas for a precise conversion, but the one I use in daily life when shopping is that two American pounds equal a little less than a kilogram, a gallon equal about 3.8 liters, and that 4 cups of liquid make about a liter.

Another easy tip is that on a lot of jars and cans next to the weight of grams, you can find with smaller letter the exact weight in ounces.

When shopping for fruits and vegetables, have in mind that most items are priced by kilos, though some that are more expensive can be priced by 100 grams.

The local grocery stores and the markets often offer a very good variety of fresh vegetables and fruits, sometimes sold by the farmers themselves.

While the one-stop shopping is getting bigger in Germany, for one who wants to experience old-fashioned shopping, specialization stores run by masters of their profession are still widely available.

Go to the local butcher shop (Metzgerei) or the bakery (Bäckerei), and get your fresh meat and bread from there.

Also, in Germany you have to pay for any bags used to carry the groceries. The average cost is around 15 cents, and is part of the effort to help reduce waste and encourage responsible consumption. This is why most Germans bring

their own cloth bags (you can purchase one for a euro at the register) or baskets to carry their purchases in. When using a basket or a cloth bag you will help the environment, feel like a local, and have a little souvenir to take home.

If you are planning on shopping for a lot of items, or expensive ones, do not forget your VAT forms. Most big stores accept them.

Cooking may also be challenging, especially baking at the right temperatures because Germans measure temperature in Celsius instead of Fahrenheit. To convert temperature from Fahrenheit to Celsius, subtract 32 and multiply by .56, or you can buy an oven thermometer that shows both scales. I personally have a little table on the refrigerator that I always refer to when I cook American recipes in my German oven. Clip out the table below to help with your quick conversions.

It is also a smart idea to invest in a measuring cup for liquids that has milliliters printed on one side and ounces on the other. This will help you out if you come across a German recipe you'd like to try.

Looking to try a new style? Learn European sizes first

Staff report

American sizing is much easier to remember, than the German sizing, as it generally goes by age.

German clothes sizes are designed to represent the height of the child in centimeters.

This system assumes that each child grows by six centimeters between sizes.

Conversion sites

To make adult clothing conversions a bit easier, there are several Web sites that offer conversion charts for men and women's clothes and shoes:

Clothing: <http://www.evalu8.org/staticpage?page=review&siteid=296>

Shoes: <http://www.pediwear.co.uk/chart.php>

*Hint: Most of your American-bought shoes that have the size on the inside label will have the European sizing conversion on them. This makes finding your size even easier!

Age German Size

2-3 months:	56
3-6 months:	62 - 68
6-9 months:	68 - 74
9-12 months:	74 - 80
12-18 months:	80 - 86
18-24 months:	86 - 92
3 years:	92 - 98
4 years:	98 - 104
5 years:	104 - 110
6 years:	110 - 116
7 years:	116 - 122
8 years:	122 - 128
9 years:	128 - 134
10 years:	134 - 140
11 years:	140 - 146
12 years:	146 - 152
13 years:	152 - 158
14 years:	158 - 164
15 years:	164 - 170
16 years:	170-176

Measurement Conversions

Teaspoons (t. or tsp.)	Tablespoons (T. or Tbsp.)	Cups (c.)	Fluid Ounces (fl.oz.)	Milliliters (ml.)
3 tsp.	1 Tbsp.		1/2 Oz.	15 ml
6 tsp.	2 Tbsp.	1/8 Cups	1 Oz.	30 ml
12 tsp.	4 Tbsp.	1/4 Cups	2 Oz.	50 ml
16 tsp.	1/3 Cups			75 ml
18 tsp.	6 Tbsp.		3 Oz.	
24 tsp.	8 Tbsp.	1/2 Cups	4 Oz.	125 ml
30 tsp.	10 Tbsp.		5 Oz.	
32 tsp.		2/3 Cups		150 ml
36 tsp.	12 Tbsp.	3/4 Cups	6 Oz.	175 ml
48 tsp.	16 Tbsp.	1 Cup	8 Oz.(1/2 Pint)	250 ml
2 Cups			16 Oz. (1 Pint)	500 ml
4 Cups			32 Oz.(2 Pints or 1 Quart)	1 liter

*Note: A "dash" or a "pinch" are generally considered to be less than 1/8 teaspoon.

The metric system can legally be used in every country in the world (including the United States), and in many countries its use is obligatory. Americans frequently spell 'metre' as 'meter', and 'litre' as 'liter'; however 'metre' and 'litre' are the official BIPM names for these units (although the American usage has been approved by the U.S. government). The official U.S. spelling for 'deca' is 'deka', though Americans use the international spelling more often than the American one. The unit 'gram' is also sometimes spelled 'gramme', though that is an older spelling.

Area Conversions

American	Metric
1 inch	= 2.54 cm
1 foot	= 30 cm
1 yard	= 0.91 meters
1 mile	= 1.6 km
1 ounce	= 28 grams
1 pound	= 0.45 kg
1 short ton	= 0.9 metric ton
1 sq. inch	= 6.5 sq. cm
1 sq. ft.	= 0.09 sq. meters
1 cubic foot	= 0.03 cubic meters
1 cubic yard	= 0.76 cubic meters

Temperature Conversions

Gas Mark	Fahrenheit	Celsius	Description
1/4	225	110	Very cool
1/2	250	130	
1	275	140	Cool
2	300	150	
3	325	170	Very moderate
4	350	180	Moderate
5	375	190	
6	400	200	Moderately hot
7	425	220	Hot
8	450	230	
9	475	240	Very hot

Temps:

If you know Fahrenheit, subtract 32, then multiply by 5/9 to get Celsius.
If you know Celsius, multiply by 9/5, then add 32.



BOSS gives single Soldiers travel options

Special to the Bavarian News

What is BOSS?

The Better Opportunities for Single Soldiers is a program that supports the overall quality of life for single Soldiers. The BOSS program encourages and assists members to identify and influence well-being issues and concerns that can directly or indirectly enhance their morale, living environment, or personal growth/development, and provide recommended improvements through the chain of command.

BOSS provides single Soldiers the opportunities to identify and plan recreation and leisure activities. Additionally, it gives them the opportunity to participate in and contribute to their respective communities. The core components, or Three Pillars, of the program are Recreation and Leisure, Community Service and Well-being.

History of BOSS

BOSS was established in 1989 to respond to the recreation needs of single Soldiers, who made up 37 percent of the Army. As the program was implemented throughout the Army, it became evident that Soldiers' well-being was the primary concern for the single Soldier.

Who Participates in BOSS?

The BOSS program is targeted at *you*, the single Soldier. This also includes single parents and unaccompanied service members. Although the intent of the BOSS program is to provide recreation and leisure activities for single service members, events are typically open to all authorized MWR patrons.

What is the Single Soldier Role in BOSS?

The BOSS program is a single Soldier driven program. Single service members from major subordinate commands and separate units on an installation comprise the program and its committees. Single Soldiers have the opportunity to be local BOSS board members, unit representatives, or volunteers to assist in planning events and attending activities.

How Does BOSS Work?

Installations organize a formal BOSS program. It includes a committee of single Soldier representatives from installation units. Typically the installation command sergeant major serves



Pvt. David Hayward of 1st Battalion, 77th Armor Regiment and Spc. Chris White of 299th Forward Support Battalion race for the bean bags while strapped to the bungee run at BOSS's "This One is For You" event Sept. 20.

Photo by Sandra Wilson

as the senior military advisor to the council.

An installation MWR advisor is appointed to provide guidance in the planning of activities, financial accountability, and marketing.

The Department of the Army BOSS Circular (DA Cir 608-04-01 and AR 215) defines the roles of the chain of command and MWR personnel at all levels.

Issues Raised by BOSS

BOSS members are encouraged to identify both local and Army-wide well-being issues and concerns that affect their quality of life.

These issues are thoroughly addressed during BOSS meetings to assess the issue and determine recommended improvements.

The issues are formatted and submitted to the senior military advisor to find a solution through the proper command channels or local staff agencies.

Issues that cannot be resolved at the installation level will be submitted to the installation Army Family Action Plan, or AFAP, forum. If adopted by the local AFAP delegates and approved by the commander, the issues are then forwarded to the U.S. Army Garrison AFAP forum.

The next step, if adopted, is the Headquarters, Department of the Army, AFAP Conference where it can change laws, DoD and Army policies, and improve overall well-being programs and services.

MWR offers Soldiers, families a slice of home, plenty to do

by MARKHEETER

Bavarian News

Once new Soldiers and family members get over the jet lag upon their arrival in Europe, they usually want to take a moment to relax.

Maybe a trip around the corner to the library or a trip around the new country to a hot tourist destination.

Programs under your local Morale, Welfare and Recreation have just the ticket for you, and might have one or two programs that you didn't know about.

"We're here to take care of the social, recreational and emotional welfare needs of our Soldiers," said Michael Duday, director of U.S. Army Garrison Schweinfurt MWR.

"That way, they can focus on combat. They can be well-rounded individuals, so when they're out in combat, they can focus on that because they know MWR back in garrison is taking care of their wives and kids, as an example," he said.

Most cities or counties in the United States provide people with choices for recreation, such as libraries and parks, Duday said, but when troops head for Europe they leave that behind.

"We're a touch of home for people. All the things that a typical city or county back in the states might provide for recreation or leisure – that's really what MWR is about," he said.

Whether it's an auto skills center, a library, a bowling alley, an arts and craft center, or a full-service fitness center, MWR facilities should be among the first place a Soldier or a family visit upon arriving at their new duty station.

"Basically, no matter where you go in the Army, you'll have consistent service. You'll have MWR at any post, camp, or station where you may be in the Army," Duday said, noting that Soldiers may use those facilities at any installation in the world.

MWR is also the proponent agency for Better Opportunities for Single Soldiers, a program designed to give the single Soldier avenues for leisure and recreation.

"A lot of our population is single Soldiers. We recognize that and we want the single Soldiers to get involved in the B.O.S.S. program. This is their forum and they can help us the MWR leadership know what they're interested in," Duday said.

And every dollar that MWR takes in as profit is turned back around and put into the community programs, upgrades and improvements to MWR facilities, according to Duday.

"The bottom line is that we're here for everyone on the garrison," he said, encouraging people to contact their local MWR office upon arrival in Germany.



Photo by Tess Peterson

MWR hosts a variety of organizations and activities around post to suit nearly any interest, such as the Army 10 Miler, earlier this year in Grafenwoehr.

Three Pillars of BOSS

Recreation

Recreation and leisure activities may be planned solely by the BOSS committee or in conjunction with other MWR activities. Soldiers assume the primary role in planning BOSS events. Events planned by these committees should meet the needs and desires of single Soldiers on the installation. BOSS committees have sponsored events such as single Soldier talent shows, concerts, dances, and trips. BOSS may also coordinate with the installation commercial sponsorship personnel when planning major events.

Community Service

BOSS committees often elect to participate in community programs or projects, which make a difference in the lives of others, the community, and ultimately, themselves. BOSS members have volunteered to take part in Special Olympics and school mentoring. Some committees have developed their own programs which include sending packages to deployed Soldiers and Boss Against Drunk Driving. This pillar is voluntary in nature and must be in accordance with the installation volunteer program.

Well Being

Well-being deals primarily with those things single service members can directly or indirectly influence to enhance their morale, living environment, or personal growth and development. Some of the issues addressed by the BOSS committees include dining facilities, education, fitness, and Army Air Force Exchange Service. Soldier's well-being issues raised during BOSS meetings are resolved at the lowest possible level. Tougher issues may and have reached four-star level for resolutions.

Contacts

Hohenfels

DSN 466-4545, CIV 09472-83-4545

Schweinfurt

DSN: 354-1570

Ansbach

DSN 467-2921, CIV 09802-83-2921

Grafenwoehr and Vilseck

DSN 475-6116, CIV 09641-83-6116

Army Lodging

Ansbach

Franconian Inn

Katterbach Kaserne, Bldg. 5908

Phone: DSN 467-2812/468-1700, CIV 09802-83-2812

Front Desk: CIV 09802-95060

Hours: Monday-Friday 7 a.m.-10 p.m., Saturday, Sunday, and holidays: 9 a.m.-5 p.m.

The Franconian Inn has 34 rooms. Rooms are equipped with TV, radio, private bath, and shared kitchens. A laundry room is located in the building, which is free of charge to the occupants. Pets allowed by special arrangement.

Bamberg

The Bamberg Inn, Bldg. 7678, requires reservations for PCS and TDY personnel. Visiting relatives or travelers are housed on a space available basis.

Open Monday-Friday, 8 a.m.-5:30 p.m., and Saturday-Sunday from 10:30 a.m. to 2:30 p.m.

Call DSN 469-1700 or CIV 0951-300-1700 or after hours DSN 469-7492 or CIV 0951-300-7492.

E-mail: bamberginn@cmtymail.98asg.army.mil.

To call direct from stateside, dial 011-49-951-1700, 24 hours. For worldwide reservations, call toll free 1-800-462-7691.

Schweinfurt

Schweinfurt-Bradley Inn

Hours: Monday-Friday, 6:30 a.m.-9:30 p.m.; Saturday, Sunday, and holidays, 7:30 a.m.-5 p.m.

Call DSN 354-1700, CIV 09721-96-1700, or CIV 09721-79-4101

Wuerzberg-Leighton, Bldg. 2

Hours: Monday-Sunday, 7 a.m.-11 p.m.

Call DSN 350-1700 or CIV 0931-705-820

Hohenfels

Sunrise Lodge

Call: DSN 466-1700

Hours: Monday-Sunday, 6 a.m.-8 p.m.

Located in Bldg. 63

Grafenwoehr

Tower View Inn

Call DSN 475-1700/6182 or CIV 09641-83-1700/6182

Open Monday through Friday, 6 a.m.-10 p.m., and Saturday and Sunday 7 a.m.-8 p.m. Closed Dec. 25 and Jan. 1.

Vilseck

Kristall Inn

Call DSN 476-2555 or CIV 09662-44-1104.

Open every day 6:30 a.m.-11 p.m., closed Christmas.

Garmisch

Edelweiss Lodge

Call: DSN 440-2575

<http://www.edelweisslodgeandresort.com/home.html>

MWR hosts a variety of organizations and activities around post to suit nearly any interest, such as the Army 10 Miler, earlier this year in Grafenwoehr.